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**ANTITHEISM:**  
**REMARKS ON ITS MODERN SPIRIT.**





# ANTITHEISM:

REMARKS ON ITS MODERN SPIRIT.

BY

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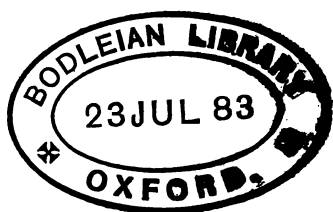
"They wist not what it was."—*Exodus*, xvi. 15.



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# ANTITHEISM:

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THE birds contended among themselves for the sovereignty; he who flew the highest was to be king; the eagle easily out-soared them all, but when he was dead tired, out slipped the starling from under his wing and beat him at a canter, proclaiming his triumph and declaring his authority with a tongue not his own.

There can be no cause of that which never had a beginning, and the converse must equally hold. If matter always existed, it did not exist in its present, if in any, form. There have been changes infinite, and every change of form is, so far as the present question is concerned, a new existence, the cause of which is to be shown and accounted for. It will not suffice to speak of an infinite potential force biding its time in an infinitely existing matter; the passing from potentiality into act is itself a new creation implying antecedent cause, and what we are wont to call secondary causes are manifestly only effects of some earlier one.

But we are all in these days perfectly competent, and some of us impetuously willing, in advance even of the ever revered Aristotle the equal oracle of truth and

error, to trace back the accretion and succession of all present forms, stripping them off one by one, as it were, until we arrive at the once famous primitive matter without form, that is to say, something beyond our powers of conception waiting for some act or cause to become conceivable.

But it is not the custom in questions of this kind to flinch from any difficulty however insurmountable. We may not, it is true, openly assume the subject to be in terms within the limits of our natural powers, but we may go on with our search negatively for a long way, conscientiously and scientifically cutting down element after element, form after form, property after property, something after something, until far away beyond all reach of definition or contradiction, we arrive at something next to nothing with no dividing line between them; the nearest expression of which is perhaps that old and well-known one of the mathematical point which we remember to have been made first under duress and later on under protest, to call "that which is without parts and without magnitude;" the framer of it possibly not very accurately calling to mind, that before form came there were no such things as magnitude or parts anywhere.

But then, is this inconceivable ever-vanishing next-to-nothing a reality? Do we not in this stripping process, do we not in all our researches in this question, draw continually nearer to an idea? and if to an idea, then to a mind? and if to a mind, then to an infinite sustaining and ruling mind? In fact, we only know matter by hearsay, and only acknowledge it because we think we perceive it. May it not be, that in all its supposed

infinite extension, with all its alleged infinite properties and parts, including our own brains, tongues, and bodies, it is only a notorious idea? May it not be, that all this immeasurable visible universe around us, conventionally called creation, has not been actually created and does not really exist at all? that what was done at the beginning was the gift or imparting of a consciousness and faculty of perceiving and dealing with ideas to certain existences called into being by one and the same creative and sustaining force, and thenceforward standing and to stand in certain established relations both to that force, and each to every other of them, under certain laws and conditions, which, so far as our common experience goes, have never been broken; and so as that all the so-called material universe may be but a seeming embodiment of these ideas, although to us as strong as an actual reality?

If there were none but materialistic philosophers in the world we could, we think, maintain this position from approved axioms and postulates, and other "documents" of their own school. The main, but not always avowed objection to it is, that if all things exist in and depend upon an infinite mind whose thoughts can in no case be drawn into question, a miracle must be at all times a possible event, and that is a position which the modern liberty of thought, or right of framing theories, can never allow even at the point of the sword.

The idealist is plainly first in the list, because until we perceive something there is to us nothing to perceive; and as he presents no atomic details he can lay no snares for himself or others. The materialist is all detail and all surface; for it is only by its supposed superficial

impact on the senses, that we even suspect that there can be such a thing as his so-called matter or material properties. Thus on the great knock-on-the-table argument, we know at once by the feel that the table is hard, but it is only by reason and experience that we get a step further, and learn afterwards that it is also solid, and both reason and experience are very fallacious things.

We have been called upon of late by thinkers of eminence to accept certain material atoms without parts or predicable forms, and of less than assignable dimensions, but possessing in themselves a certain material energy, working under common fixed laws and conditions, as the sole and sufficient creative force and cause of the universe, and to take thus upon trust a force or first cause having its seat in an almighty creative aggregation of atoms. We confess to a counter prejudice in ourselves which is not of the reasoning intellect ; but apart from that, we seem to ourselves to have one or two purely intellectual difficulties on the point.

We learn from science very much about the laws of matter, that is to say, of atoms *en masse* ; but how can we be sure that all these laws, many of which, that of attraction for instance, are social laws and open to continual and complicated workings from without, can or will follow all these ever-shrinking, self-nullifying atoms, themselves too minute to possess minutiae, without falling out or changing their properties or modes of action by the way ? Does not the eccentric chuck in Babbage's calculating machine, converting the series of natural numbers into one of squares or cubes, and letting in other miracles at will, show that they may so change ? We really think this argument almost equal to the occasion.

We are, it seems, by common consent relieved from taking stock of our natural powers before entering on these questions, being like certain other smaller irrepressibles well known in natural and domestic histories, able to leap many times our own intellectual lengths, and can only fail through the same want of unanimity. Extravagance or breaking bounds, is the leading privilege of all philosophy, and all philosophy worth its salt disdains apology, and can always frown down refutation.

If there be such a thing as an atom of matter, there is or ought to be such a thing as an atom of an idea, its shadow or philosophical acceptance, as it were, payable, funds or no funds, at sight ; this is on the supposition that nothing exists but matter.

But where is the working energy of these atoms to be found ? There can be no conceivable practical energy in matter, which must have its place in space, not passing from one body, particle or atom of matter to another, and if we could suppose it possible that there should be but one single atom throughout the universe, give it what energy you will, it cannot multiply itself—it must remain inert and without change for ever, for want of means of deploying, as it cannot work with effect on the absolute void surrounding it ; for space of itself is not an existence. If there were nothing but pure spirit existing anywhere, there could be no such thing as space, for pure spirit, though it may have a spiritual body and individuality, has no place ; but the instant you present us a speck of matter, space comes into being as an effect of the common cause of both.

But if there be one, there are countless such atoms, and it has been said that these weaklings, though unable to



effect anything by or for themselves singly, may yet have caused all forms by combining their energies and mutual or reciprocal impact, just as a damp hay-stack will sometimes take fire through inward fermentation and so pass into a new form altogether. But this is rather splitting the question than answering it. Such a reciprocal energy working between two atoms must be objective in part to each of them, and this patchwork energy partly subjective and partly objective remains to be accounted for, unless you take refuge in an energy entirely objective to all the world of atoms, which we suppose might hardly be so satisfactory to many philosophers as, with a few additions, it might be to ourselves.

But then comes the further difficulty of life—life in the abstract, and the several concrete lives of which we are conscious in and around us—and it has been sought to meet this by inventing a new word, *Protozoon*; that is to say, although an atom is always an atom, the primitive atom, as the origin of all things, may well be deemed to have possessed in itself in addition to the ordinary material energies or properties of motion, such as that for instance of attraction and so on, an atomic, but essential principle of life, which has since developed or self-improved itself into mind, perhaps even into Deity. We should rather apprehend that the primitive atom might find itself a little crowded under such an arrangement.

This suggestion, however, we rather count as, if anything, an advance in our own direction, only beginning at the wrong end, for we, too, say that the Deity is life, and the universe, apart from that life, nothing. We cannot, however, regard it as a truth coming by observation, or as anything more than a happy expedient, if indeed it be

happy, suddenly adopted to meet the exigency of the argument, and more akin to Jonah's withering gourd than to Jonah's effective message; and we can only accept it as a concession that life always existed, and that, associated and trammelled as we find it to be in some as yet unexplained way in certain cases with matter, it has gained a victory over it, which victory must have been secure from the beginning.

We all know and are fully conscious that we possess sense or feeling, and mind or spirit, and that the latter especially, beyond a certain obscure impression not easily definable that when we think we are exercising the brain, is in itself and in all its properties and operations so far as they reach our consciousness, unplaced in space although of infinite range, having no form or quality in common with matter, yet always found associate with it in this way; that wherever we find certain modifications of matter, there mind always is, and there it abides so long as those modifications subsist; and from this it has become or ought to be a question whether, supposing this modified material concrete in which mind is found be really composed of infinite material dust-atoms or particles, it does not follow that this inseparably associate pervading concrete mind must also be made up of infinite mind-atoms or particles, leading thus to the further question, whether the manifest close affinity in all things between body and mind be a chemical or spiritual one, whether body is mind or mind body, or each both. Nor need the diversity of the phenomena of each of them interpose any difficulty; there are as broad differences in the material world alone taken separately, for instance, in the form of energy known as a storm of thunder and

lightning, the lightning does all the work, and the thunder, roar as it may, can only remonstrate after the event ; and yet without both these so excessively unlikes, there can be no thunder-storm, no clearing of the air, no spring time or harvest. We might give a yet more obvious and by no means unscholastic instance : we never could make out in mixing certain powders which of them is the true cause of the effervescence ; and effervescence is motion, and in the materialistic view motion is a form of energy, and energy is the cause of all things, including the powders and including mind.

Such we conceive to be a fair statement of the question, as statements on these subjects go, and such the way in which we should expect to find it expressed in the note-book of any conscientious student of materialistic philosophy.

The spirit is the man, and the true and only worthy end in view is to know this spirit. For this we must search it thoroughly, and in so doing we find at once that it is weak and under very objective-looking laws, and that we need, not an occasional guide, but one that shall be always present and watchful for us, and therefore always to be depended upon. It is this guide, and the hope of finding him, that alone gives the question any value to us. We are here only stating our own view, which some who have shared it so far, but fainting by the way, are now, for the sake of a present peace, step by step unconsciously giving up. We may break, but cannot be properly said to offend against, an abstract law ; and break or observe it we will at our own pleasure, unless we know by whom and by what lawful authority it was ordained ; but once satisfied as to that, we can

and may turn our minds to obedience in hope and gladness.

All Pagan philosophers whatsoever, from the Pillars of Hercules to the extremest Ind, failed utterly through want of earnestness ; and they wanted this earnestness because they never truly realised the deep immediate life and death importance to themselves and others of the finding of this guide and Law-giver.

Could they but have seen the book of Job, and studied it fairly aright, not as an autocratic revelation, but as a didactic poem of an author unknown, they might have been brought full home to the main truth. Of intellect, of mental effort and culture, there was never any shortcoming among them, and by these alone some of them were enabled to recognize the unity and power of the Deity, but as of a Deity enthroned afar, and apart from themselves and all their interests. He was to them but an abstraction of all that they could conceive of glory and goodness in and for himself, but beyond that, nothing. They might perhaps at times think of him in a listless sort of way, as a bestower of rewards and punishments, but of any active and abiding goodwill in him towards themselves, or of any answering obligation on their own part they had no sense. Had they sought him as did Job, they would have said with Job, "though He slay me, yet will I cling to Him." He was to them the cold perfection of goodness and power without care or compassion for suffering man. Of that higher quality of Divine mercy that forgives offences, they had no thought ; perhaps, indeed, because they felt no need of it, as finding that they could on all fitting occasions well enough forgive themselves. The pride of reason and crown of

rhetoric were to them sufficing motive and reward ; it was a lesser thing to them to be wrong in substance, than not to confute an opponent. Even in our own times, Faust was well enough satisfied with Mephistopheles at first for the aggressive faculties and opportunities he gave him of practically refuting everybody he came across and having his own way in all things, and not improbably felt something like slight twinges of friendship for him now and then during the earlier period of their acquaintance.

But what need to speak of the uncertainties and want of earnestness of other philosophers, when the great Socrates himself, who confuted or confounded all he met all day long, is recorded to have said that a belief in a future state ought to be accepted, because it might do good to yourself, and could do harm to nobody !

But again, we are met, sometimes even in these days, with the objection that as we have no experience or cognizance of spirit except as associated with some material body, it is but reasonable to conclude that the spirit which we do not see and have never seen, is only a mode or form of the body which we do see.

To this we think we may answer, that the general and complete harmony of arrangement and action of mind and body, is conclusive that they spring from one and the same cause, but not that they are one and the same thing. We perceive that they are liminary, imperfect things, which their cause cannot be ; for whatever they may be, the cause is always perceptibly greater in the same incommensurable degree. We can distinguish between the two and their respective properties and operations, and our position here is, that if we find in

ourselves at any time spiritual phenomena (i.e. ideas) and workings of mind in no way relating to, or having any concern with or presenting any analogy to aught in the body or the outer visible world around us, the spirit that presents us with these, cannot be wholly bound to the body, but must be or carry with it something wholly objective to and far above it.

Determination usurps and apes authority and frowns down all denial, very much as six feet of spurs and accoutrements suggest a successful charge of cavalry. The position of the true materialist in his strongest mood is, or ought to be, that organism, life, perception, intellect, will, moral sense and conscience, are nothing more than natural products of the living and moving atoms above spoken of ; the five first being manifestly mere forms or modes of being and doing of these atoms under the action of the laws of "conservation of energy," and the two last (the moral sense and conscience) scarcely so much, being simple illusions or misconceptions of the modes and workings of the five.

The Agnostics *few* Gnostics, having once by some unaccountable accident felt the grief of doubt and bewilderment as of an incurable malady, are now steadfastly purposed to accept nothing less than positive knowledge on every question, and failing that, to ignore all things all round for ever.

We indeed, as Idealists, and working on our own lines, are out of these controversies, and can join no issue in any of them ; but we look somehow to show a right to be heard here and there. We go all our way alone. We must of necessity do so ; we have no friends. We cannot divide the question, and can propose no second one.

We must and do say, "abolish mind and you abolish matter ; abolish a primary, infinite, all-sustaining intelligence, and neither should we be here to assert, nor you anywhere to deny."

First, then, to the Agnostic we would say, that our Idealism, whether you accept it or not, is safely within your assumed limits of the natural means of actual knowledge, being correlative with your surroundings, with the visible world around you and with yourselves ; and you cannot plead your Agnostic privileges as an excuse for not attempting an assay if it be pure gold or not. Your surroundings are no doubt infinite, but they are in and about your ways ; they meet, offend, inform and exercise you every moment of your existence, and so far as regards this question of Idealism, what one of your surroundings is, such are all the others. You can at least apprehend the question and trace out the inevitable consequences which must follow on whichever of two conclusions you may arrive at. You may take any object whatever, and say that you cannot determine whether it is an actual reality or only an idea in your own mind. But you have natural faculties which enable you to entertain the question, though it be one lying between infinities, or rather, and more correctly speaking, between a seeming infinite matter on the one hand, and an eternal infinite spirit on the other ; and we will add, if you cannot by your reasoning powers determine it, there are other means at hand by which you may ; but these, the stop-shorts that you are, you will not even look at, and we cannot compel you to do so.

The controversy is truly internecine. On a superficial

view indeed it is only a battle of words, to the uninstructed wholly unintelligible ; but in its full depth and import, the question is the most awful one which it is possible to conceive ; and so much so that to some it may seem almost unlawful to handle it at all.

This, which in common parlance we call matter, be it what it may, is, in all its effects and relations upon and to us, really and truly matter in the popular, unscientific acceptation of the term, in and through the whole range of its natural workings and phenomena. If earth be mere dust and ashes, quickened by some innate subjective principle or energy into motion and combinations, ultimately developing into all existing forms, it must always have existed in some form, and there is no God ; there is simply no room for Him. If, on the other hand, it did not always exist, then, as nothing can come from nothing, the entire universe, visible and invisible, all life, thought, intelligence and individualities whatsoever, must have issued forth as one entire pre-ordained and pre-arranged scheme from its first cause, which must be a spiritual one, not itself subject to time or succession, but the cause of both without either beginning or ending ; and if it so issued by an act of will, so by a continuing act of the same will must it now exist and be sustained ; and if that will cease, the thing willed, that is, the universe as above defined, must at once, in the very instant, cease with it. Under such conditions matter can possess neither quality nor movement but in and by that will by and through which it was ordained and exists. At this point we may discern something like a battle of words, for, call it matter or call it idea, the subject, which certainly exists, remains the same ;



provided always, that if the cause is God, where His will and power are not, there nothing is.

But it is insisted by others that the truth of the question is too far above our natural powers of apprehension to be confessed by the intellect, and that the true policy is that of the Priest and the Levite who turned aside to avoid a difficulty.

This intellect of ours is continually changing front in action, and its march is not always in advance. In matters of science, indeed, we are truly enough making new discoveries, and telling out new wonders from day to day, without stay or hindrance, and with an excellent grace ; and these we accept as knowledge, and knowledge is peace, for there can be none to break it where all are agreed.

But a little below knowledge is belief ; and belief is of all colours, restless and uneasy, and not always to be trusted, and yet an innate necessity of our nature ; whether "yea" or "nay," we are always believing something ; there is no such actuality as doubt, which is merely the impalpable interval between one weak belief and another. What we call doubt is either the indistinguishable flickering of inconsistent ideas, or, it may be, the rise and fall of empty buckets in a well, or a closed book, an insensible blank.

The mind is normally always active, but the faculty by which we reason can do nothing until it is set in action and receives its marching order from the will. But this will is not itself absolutely free, being sorely disturbed and hindered by the ceaseless strife within us between our natural likes and dislikes, the dangerous classes of our microcosm, and that disposition to better

things which we will call here the moral instinct or sense, but which has with us a far higher name and import. St. Paul did not reveal this strife, but in his agony of spirit felt and declared it.

There are no words that can worthily express the greatness and dignity of this moral sense in its full import and perfection ; and our position is, that be the intellectual faculties and the likes and dislikes above-mentioned what they may, this moral sense can be no derivative of matter.

We have been reminded of late, a little obliquely perhaps, that it is *mauvais ton* in these polite days to speak too religiously of atheism ; and we agree, remembering what the lamb said to the wolf and its consequences, and will do our best to tilt *à l'outrance*, as we are bound to do, without breaking the peace ; provided only that, if we ever do by any chance or force of circumstances seem to infringe on this convenient rule of promiscuous charity, we would have it to be understood that we have kept back a good deal, mean more than we say, and claim merit for not having said that more.

But indeed we rather, if anything, prefer the impersonal-first-causist to the maintainer of any form of debased natural theism. They agree indeed in this, that they both began their search after truth with a doubting, it may be an unconscious, prejudice—and in this question to doubt is to deny—and therefore by the laws of thought they can never find it. They do not search for God at all, but for some abstraction that may by any means answer their purpose.

Suppose we call one of these Lucretius, the trumpeter of Epicurus ; and the other Spinoza ; the one magnificent,

sublime, manly, free of thought, taking all nature by storm, matchless in expression (his stately hexameters ring in one's head like the roll of a drum or well-toned processional march), fertile in resources, disdainful of reverse, cheerful and frank, and never afraid to show his hand, by all admired, and by all shelved in favour of his doubting commentators ; the other, sitting alone in cold and gloom, pre-occupied with a subjective deity, the idol of his own proper den, which idol he dresses up from time to time according to his mood with any attributes of the great and good, the anthropomorphic ideal of which he can find in his own mind, but with none others ; and then suddenly starting up to tell us of "an infinite substance with infinite attributes, all infinite," which he pronounces to be God Himself, and willing on any sufficient provocation to pray to it conditionally as such.

This definition we gladly accept as a model of clearness in a philosophic sense. There is in it nothing superfluous, nothing that can be denied or that is not absolutely true, nothing that instructs or in the least concerns ourselves. Dealing as it does with infinities all round, it deals with incomprehensibles all round, and leaves us just as we were, without any new concrete idea whatever. We can have no idea of goodness and mercy without both subject and object, and these qualities, which are necessarily all in all to us, unless well placed in such a definition, are virtually ignored and assuredly no part of it.

And to this "incomprehensible substance with incomprehensible attributes, all incomprehensible," we are invited, perhaps that is too strong an expression, per-

mitted if we think it worth our while to pray ; as if such a thing under the proposed conditions were possible, or could be even rational or certainly lawful. We might as well pray to a London fog for light as to such an abstraction of clouds and darkness for aid in trouble or anything else.

If there be an Eternal Personal God He must be a Spirit, for there is nothing nobler than spirit ; and He must have dominion over our spirits, for nothing can be beyond His sway ; and He must have a will towards us, for He made us ; and if He has such a will, there must be communion between us, and that communion must be a spiritual one, and we must seek it by spiritual means, that is, by due direction of our thoughts, and the expression of them in prayer, which prayer may be mental but runs naturally into words.

But our thoughts are ever so unruly that it is hard to pray aright, though it be but entering by a door that is always open. Owing to our weakness prayer needs preparation, often a troubled spirit, always intention and a setting aside of all secular thoughts ; for in the act of true and sincere prayer, such act being a spiritual one, we are in the unseen spiritual world and not only in the immediate presence but in the very act of communion with Him to whom we pray, for He, being omniscient, must hear us, whether with favour or not, and we must have a perfect assurance, and that not of the intellect only, of this presence and communion ; for unless we truly feel this assurance, either we do not truly pray at all, or, like Cain's sacrifice, it is not accepted, and for a similar reason.

We can only truly pray to an answering spirit, not a vague, shifting phantasm of our own imaginations, for

then we do but pray to ourselves, but a spirit who, of His own free grace, accords to us in the very act of faithful prayer full and absolute assurance of His actual presence and infinite power and goodness. Nor need we fear any distinction of persons in this, or doubt that the good pagan who has never even heard the name of Christ, may be as much under grace in his prayer as the truest believer. Grace will meet him though as yet he knows it not, even as it did the Æthiopian eunuch in his chariot, who under divine direction was led to and instructed and presently admitted into full gospel privileges by Philip. The one thing wanting at the death of Socrates, as we have received the account of it, was, that he did not truly pray to the Deity of whose being he was intellectually assured, and the moral of his peaceful end thus lacks to us something of force and completeness. We admire rather than are strongly affected by it.

But we ourselves, what do we do when we pray? When we pray we say! and that is too generally all. We carry our vanities to and shake our baubles at the very foot of the Sacred Table, and count what we call our alms and oblations for merits as per ledger. We do, indeed, on occasions of imminent peril, strait or calamity, put no small zeal into our prayer, but it is the zeal of terror and selfishness, a zeal for ourselves, with much thought of the shape and colour of our own immediate need, but little of the character of Him whom we address; and the words we use, the noise we make, are nothing better than an articulate scream.

What concerns ourselves must be within our rights to inquire into, and can hardly be altogether beyond our reach. The moral sense of which we have already

spoken, and which we will here venture to call "spiritual," regulates or seeks to regulate ideas and tendencies within us of which we become conscious in the first instance through our perceptions; and these perceptions are alleged by some to be merely the effects of certain motions, energies and incidents of the matter of which we are composed. But we repeat that if this spirit be found to possess one single element that cannot be traced full home to these material perceptions, it cannot be wholly subjective in matter or bound by or confined to the laws which govern it, but must have other laws of its own, which laws must be extra-material, and the source and true character of this spiritual sense must therefore be sought for, not in a material but in a spiritual world.

We may look here a little to the consequences of these two opposed conclusions. If morality (the word is taken here in its highest sense) be of command, it must be suited to our nature and speak intelligibly to our apprehensions, and we may add here that if it does so suit and speak, it is an argument that it is of command. There is then but one First Cause of all, and we have but to listen and obey. If we are under no such command, if we are really bound by no moral tie to some one objective living power, there is none whom we can offend, and we are free from all moral obligations but such as we may have willingly imposed upon ourselves, and so long as we decently fulfil the requirements of this self-imposed obligation we can do no wrong. We are bound to obey the social law in force around us because we elect to live in society, and accept benefits from it, but if we break this law, we may in most cases make amends or

pay the forfeit, even if it be the extreme one of life for life ; the act and its consequences are fairly written off, and any remorse we may think fit to feel for the act must be superfluous, irrational and factitious ; for as the law which we have broken is itself conventional, such also must be the conscience which suffers this remorse, a patchwork of the thoughts of many minds, a conscience not wholly our own. But further, what if this remorse lead to something worse than itself ? We all know that if we deeply and without just cause injure another, we constitute him a standing reproach to ourselves, and he has little read the spirit that is in him, who does not know how swiftly and surely this leads on to envy, hatred and malice, and all crimes.

We cannot altogether accept the jaunty and somewhat nineteenth-century expression, that "conduct is three-fourths of our lives." To us it savours more of confidence than authority. We greatly prefer Bishop South's view, that a Christian temper is two-thirds of Christianity. We retire into the unseen world not sparsely, nor rarely, nor always willingly, for it is pleasurable or painful as we make it for ourselves, nor can we avoid it at will. It is our doom to labour and take care for the things of this natural life ; one of the most exalted characters we ever heard of was a tent-maker and, as we presume, con-sorted with tent-makers. But apart from this, when we are not in the very act of working out this doom, our thoughts are continually drawn towards, and passing into the unseen, and we thus live far less entirely in this visible world than perchance we think. Nor is this a class privilege of the highly cultured. All secular pursuits chill ; but there is one remedy for all ; there is one

sun that as in the seen, so in the unseen world, gives equal light and warmth to all. All are alike drawn to this unseen world—our true home. Then if all are thus drawn we conclude that there is One that draws in whom is no respect of persons.

We seem in taking stock of our faculties, to write off some of the chief of them as uncommercial, unmarketable commodity.

It seems to be a settled policy with many (we will produce some eminent *confitentes reos* presently) to disparage the imaginative faculty. It has been said that the imagination only recalls and deals with the shadows of things we have seen, the ideas or images of past impressions, and cannot therefore add to our knowledge or do other than distract us in our search for it. That may be in part true, but is an undue limiting of the faculty itself to the instruments with which it works. These shadows or images are not the imagination itself, nor do they present any full measure of its work. The imagination is not an isolated faculty, nor ever perhaps in full action except in association with others, from which it receives force and grace continually. With some of these it is in such close affinity that it is difficult to draw any hard and fast line of division between them. We know not that we can invent or even reason without some aid from the imagination, and that aid, until we have so developed ourselves as to be able to perceive the whole world of possible ideas carpeted out before us according to their tribes and relations, so as to be taken in at a glance, we had better perhaps hope always to receive until philosophy or ourselves have come to an end.



What we will, that we believe ; and conversely, what we will not, that we do not believe : therefore all belief is wilful and unreliable. This confession of our weakness is to some extent true, but a little truth made too much of may be as mischievous as a direct untruth. We may at least inquire what the will is, and where it comes from ; we may fairly ask why the now far-famed conservative energy of the materialist, after having done so much in all unimaginable ways to make us moving and sentient beings, to give us ground to stand upon and food to eat, and to provide us with so many pleasant things beside, and withal, a hearty will to use and enjoy them, should at last, without warning, so far turn its back on its own policy, as to give us a stronger will not to use them ; or in other words, why it has imprisoned the will in the conscience, and where did it get the conscience for the purpose ?

We would wish to say a few words as to this in our own way. The mind or spirit is the seat of the conscience. The conscience tells us of right and wrong, of righteousness and its loss ; it does not tell us of future retribution : the dread of punishment for offences is like the punishment itself, objective to the conscience, which has its own proper torment in its sense of guiltiness and conviction of sin. The conscience of the individual is often, no doubt, sickly, weak, fanciful and so perverted as to be incapable of distinguishing between right and wrong, and it may be at last absolutely and thoroughly depraved ; but it was not so in the beginning. The birth of righteousness is hidden in the First Cause, and was imparted by Him to man with all proper safeguards for preserving it ; but folly came and with it trouble ; and

the trouble of a conscience which has once been at ease can only be said to be a prejudice if suffering of which the cause and beginning are seen, is one; and that is rather a hard thing to say, because, as we can have no sense of fear until we have once felt pain, so neither can we have tryings of conscience until we have once done wrong.

We receive ideas from the outward visible world around us abundantly, but we make them doubly our own by the subjective workings of our own minds. There is a perfect and admirable fitness in all the natural objects around us, but the sense and sentiment of beauty which we derive from observing that fitness, is in our own minds. If at any time greatly troubled or anxious, we disregard, perhaps fairly hate all beautiful objects, as Satan, and for the same reason, did the sun. Change the mood, and the sense of beauty returns. Why is this? Nerves. So says Buchan's Domestic Medicine; and so says many a goody goody, and so, more circumlocutively at first but afterwards in good round words, says the materialist, the putter down of all goodies. But nerves and muscles do not commit murder, any more that the parts of speech make eloquent orations. There is always some antecedent motive cause that sets them in action; that does and is answerable for the mischief. If the nerves are really such energizing positives as they are said to be, they will have enough to do when they come to tell us why in our advance towards death and perfection, they have set up so many moral canons against things pleasant. If they are the causes of pleasure and pain, they must be equally so of morality and immorality. Then who made

them so? Who created them? Galvani: for they were lying all dead and sloppy before him, and he touched them with a wire, and they forthwith leapt and moved in concert, as quick and lively as the most advanced frog, or Bathybius (what has become of this poor child?), or deep sea slime which we may at any time see creeping and moving before us.

Now this only requires a little continuity on the part of Galvani to be a very proveable fact, and a very advanced one too. Thus, motion is the beginning of life, and Galvani in this case was the beginning of motion, and therefore the First Cause of life, and taking him as a representative character, of everything else. No doubt you must have a beginning and cause of Galvani; but you have only to turn his own wire back upon him, and you have them both, Galvani and the nerves at the opposite ends of the wire, at once; and if this be not a good positivist truth, there can be no such thing anywhere.

If we on our part say that the nerves meeting in the sensorium are, not the causes but the vehicles of sense and thought, that is well enough, and what we have a full right to say, because it is an observed natural phenomenon, the effect manifest of a hidden cause; and beyond this none have ever gone without in the end confessing that they might as well have stayed at home.

Thus much at least we seem to know, that we, being separate conscious individualities, are, however unphilosophically, fully assured of the co-existence of our fellow-men, and that they are of like natures with ourselves, so that what may be predicated of ourselves may always be

predicated in kind of them ; and then it follows that we must be all alike associated, sustained and governed by some one power, personal or impersonal, and under one law common to and embracing all alike.

It has, however, we are told, been victoriously settled by Hume and others that we have no faculties that enable us to know certainly anything like so much as all this comes to. But that, if a truth at all, is only a metaphysical one and subject to metaphysical liabilities, and whoever engages in any such inquiries will always be met in the end with this remarkable phenomenon, namely, that, be those faculties what they may, his actual persuasion of the reality of familiar things around him is never in the least degree shaken. It is surely an abysmal proposition, that we do not certainly know that the friend with whom we are conversing and who is perhaps in the act of confuting us in argument is an existing living thing. It may, however, pass well enough, like many other things, in metaphysics. But metaphysics is the only tree in the garden of knowledge that never had a root and yields no seed, and has thus neither beginning, middle, nor ending.

The creative force must be one, for the world is one ; nor can we even conceive the idea of scattered forces working to a common end, and not under the impulse of some higher one ; and this must bring us at last to the conception at least of one dominant force far above all others : and this one must be almighty, for it must be as wide as its own infinite universe ; and if almighty, then also perfect and unchangeable ; for if perfect, it cannot suffer change without losing or gaining some perfection, and that is contrary to the very idea of an eternal or

absolute perfection ; nor can it be moved to change by its own works, for that would equally imply weakness or defect of will, wisdom or power in a perfect being.

It follows then that the physical laws of this power, so far as they affect the natural heaven and earth which had a beginning will remain in force so long as that heaven and earth endure, which they will do for just as long as they were originally designed, or, if that expression offend, as they were from the first prepared to do ; but that the moral law being spiritual and a manifestation of the will of an eternal spirit, must be eternal.

Quality sprang from the Creative Word, and was spread abroad in its works, but was not in that Word itself. But with quality thus distributed came law, which in the senseless and mute creations that can take no thought for themselves, is fixed and certain, but in us who have wills of our own and can and must take thought for ourselves, is in all matters that relate to the will in action or conduct, to be searched out and learnt from the nature and conditions of our sensible surroundings ; but in doing this we soon find that there is something in us that far transcends those surroundings and which they can never satisfy ; and we are thus irresistibly led to raise our ideas from the seen to the unseen, to range in higher and spiritual fields of thought.

We do indeed, taking a broad view of things, to some extent and without very much thinking manage to agree among ourselves as to what in a moral point of view is tolerably good or intolerably the reverse. We possess a talkative morality abounding in common-places. Mercy and justice, for instance, are generally recognized as good in themselves, but we do not always discern them as they

truly are. The one is not altogether the simpleton some would make her out to be, nor the other quite the rough he looks. They are, indeed, seldom found working apart, for justice without mercy is only ceremonial cruelty, and mercy without justice a weeping folly. There is a pleasure in being merciful and there is a pride in being just, but meaning to be both we may, without due care, easily become neither, the strife of motives within us being such that we cannot always be sure that our mercy may not be for the offence rather than for the offender, and our justice some undetected self-seeking.

On the other, the materialistic, side, there is only one missing link, that, namely, between something and nothing. We cannot conceive how matter, if a reality, had a beginning—that is, ceased to be nothing—or how, if it always existed, form and change of form began. If matter always existed, force must have always existed, otherwise matter must have retained its first form without change for ever. Yet it is said that this force may have been always subjective in matter, that is, was itself material; but if so, it was not at first a creative force, that is to say, as far as creation or any kind of development is concerned, it was nothing, and the first creative motion in matter came from nothing, and this, without professing very much humility, we desire to have explained. We claim to have it shown how, on any strictly materialistic principle this change from a non-creative to a creative motion or process, that is, how creation began. If you admit a single objective element in a force acting upon matter, we are at ease, for what is objective to matter cannot itself be matter.

The materialist and agnostic seem to bring the question to something very like this: given a horse-shoe, required the cause: the one says that the sparks from the anvil are the cause, because they are always in motion; the other, coming by afterwards and finding a horse-shoe where he left a lump of iron, and seeing and knowing nothing of sparks, anvils, hammers, or tongs, pronounces even more confidently that just as likely as not the shoe made or did not make itself. There is yet a third, and he teaches us that by the law of development, modern civilisation is the cause; that is to say, that the horse, having been subdued to the use of man, and hard granite roads metalled out by ratepayers for their own purposes necessitated the providing some protection for the horse's hoof, and that to this end the iron and the shoe in due course, and in accordance with the universal law of nature in such cases, developed, the one its malleable and other properties, and the other its form, so as to suit the exigencies of the horse at the very time grazing in the adjoining meadow; and that this must be so, because, if there were no such things as horses there could be no such things as horse-shoes; all this being just what we find in the strictly parallel case of one species of organism developing new qualities and characteristics of no use to itself, but solely for the good of another wholly unallied; we refer, of course, to the case of the bee diffusing the pollen of the flower.

*Quid faciebat Deus antequam mundum faceret?* What a challenge! and at the very point where earnestness and some degree of reverence might most be looked for.

God.

A permeating, fervid Power,  
By all things felt, but seen by none ;  
That kindles up the fiery sun,  
And animates the wayside flower.

A Presence, feeling up and down,  
Which doth each part alike control,  
Mould, feed, inform, sustain the whole ;  
The base of all things and the crown.

An Eye, that sees what will be done  
In the unconscious years to come ;  
That knows each item and the sum,  
But lays necessity on none.

JOHN STAFFORD SPENCER.

We ourselves take refuge in what we know of the form and conditions of the spirit which is in us ; beyond the proper limits of that spirit we do not seek to go. We can perceive that our spirit is not necessarily subject to time, its laws or seasons ; it is not essential that it should receive ideas in succession, it is within our experience that it does not always do so ; and further, it is inconsistent and impossible that an infinite spirit should do so ; but without succession of ideas is no sense of time ; without succession of some kind, no time. Then at the first touch or motion of sensible creation, which must have been the beginning of succession and consequently of time, it is conceivable there was in being an Eternal Spirit not subject to, or existing in, or affected by time, nor abiding in space, nor possessing in its own essence or sharing any element or property of matter whatever. It is conceivable that this Spirit might possess a will, and with it infinite wisdom and power within all spiritual lines of existence, and that in its free exercise of all these it might decree that all the phenomena of a material, visible



and sensible world, with all its individual lives, should come into existence and abide in the form and with the seeming attributes of realities, and yet not as absolute realities, but instantly, always and entirely subjective in its own Divine Mind. It may be well to refer here to the first creative words, "Let there be light, and there was light." It is surely not so very impossible to conceive that at the pronouncing of this decree, light, with all its properties, started at once into this subjective existence before there was any created sentient being to perceive, or be affected by it, and when, therefore, it could have been a perception or idea formed and maintained in the Divine Mind only. Now this is conceivable as (we do not pronounce that it was so actually) the first assignment of quality to created things, for the earth was then "without form and void, and darkness (that is, negation of all quality) was upon the face of the deep." But if the view above stated can be accepted with respect to light, it must be equally so with respect to all later creations, for the purposes of which light was by anticipation provided, including our own individualities and the "breath of life" imparted to us. If you admit one, you can except none.

We do not seek to convince the materialist ; no one has ever done that. We are only stating our own views. We do not say that there is no such thing as matter, but only that it is not what it is so often taken for, and that the earth, or say (for it is a weak cause that will not bear a homely instance) the table at which we are now writing and which we touch with our hands, and we ourselves who touch it are alike semblances of things with material properties objective the one to the other, but both alike

subjective always in the mind of the Creator, who prepared both for designed purposes, ourselves to perceive, the table to affect our perceptions.

We alone are at ease in all these questions, and willingly accord to our opponents the reverence due to greatness in adversity. In this spirit we peruse and settle, and the more we peruse, the more we settle everything in reason they set before us. In this way, and on these conditions we accept as phenomenal laws of creation, development, more or less, in all its branches ; we may accept, for instance, an atomic speck growing smaller and smaller as it retires into itself, until it becomes so small that there is nothing left for it to retire into, and then by a reverse action quickening itself into sense and intellect and everything else needful ; and in the same way, as the Pantheistic turn comes round, we will peruse and settle the great moving lump of the visible universe, once upon a time awakening and picking itself up in some unobserved corner of the unseen universe—for such we aver is the true proportion and relation between the two universes—and then slowly and lazily stretching itself out into altitudes and platitudes, and spreading abroad in space in vapours and slimes, in water and dry land, in fish of the sea and fowls of the air, in cattle and all creeping things, in men, women and children, all seeming to go their own ways but all in reality going in that of the great universal lump itself, being all, in fact, as much integral parts of every part and parcel of that lump as we in our own cases are parts of every part and parcel of the food we eat, the cod-liver oil and other flesh-making portions of which so speedily become, by the natural process of the digestion, actual constituent portions of

ourselves, our minds and bodies. Only remember this, that the great Pantheoplastic energy cannot be divisible in any natural sense, and yet, being material, must be so divisible ; that is to say, that what we may perhaps from some lingering prejudice call *το θειον*, the mind or god-part of this composite, must be always "spreading undivided, operating unspent," but that the *ύλη* or paste or matter part of it, can only move after the manner of atoms, in divisions and particles, and besides all this, is always undergoing recoinage ; and from this we infer that as our own Master of the Mint is neither a sovereign nor a half-sovereign, so the force which coins and recoins this *ύλη* or matter, must be altogether in the god-part and none of it in the metal or paste in which it works ; and this brings us tolerably close home to our own position in the question, or its reverse.

The ways of exact science were never metalled for the heavy traffic of transcendental philosophies. In what the man of science of any sect of philosophy can test by diagram or formula he is supreme ; but beyond that he has no privilege. He may perhaps argue from the shifting powers of Babbage's calculating machine that two and two no longer make four, or possibly fail to pronounce what the future state of any given infinite series may be, but we do not quite so clearly see how he can make out from all this what our own future is to be, or that there is no personal God.

We remember well that when first sent to school we were long implacably Agnostic as to the four first rules of Arithmetic, insomuch as to have utterly reversed both usher and implements, and delighted the whole class when up one day at "Multiplication Table,"

by screaming out when it came to my turn for the previous question, in this fashion, probably under some mesmeric influence,

Εστιν μὲν ἡ Πολλαπλασις το παν χολη ;

‘Η δ’ αὖ Διαιρεσις γ’ ἰση.

Οὕτως Λογος Αριθμῶν των Τριων τειρει φρενας,

Χ’ ἡ Πραξις ἐς μανιην μ’ ἀγει.\*

Mathematical certainty laid aside, you the adult agnostics of the day, to whom all belief is as a dream, seem to bring matters very much to this :—You cannot now be sure, after what has been told you by Babbage, whether two and two always make four or not, the visible machine and the invisible properties of numbers not appearing to be quite agreed upon the point ; and you look around you for a dreamstone ; and then you lay yourself down to dream ; and then dream you do ; and then you wake up and tell us that your dream is gone from you, but that the interpretation of it is this ; first, that the dream is true, and that no other dream ever was, is or will be true ; that no one can ever know whether two and two always make four or not, and finally, that as you are positive that you saw neither angel nor ladder nor anything in the shape of a first cause in your dream, there can be no such thing as angel, ladder or first cause fit to dream about, and that if there be any first cause at all one is just as good as another.

\* This was afterwards discovered by the head-master to be what is now known as Sanscrit or pre-historic Greek, and was Englished by the Laureate of the day (*g.* Tennyson) and set to barrel-organ music for the consolation of undergraduates at large. This Laureate version (Multiplication is vexation, and so on) is familiar enough, though strange to say we have never seen it in print. There is, we believe, something like it in Shelley, who seems to have borrowed the idea of his disconcerted Prometheus from it.

D

Having thus dreamt your way pleasantly back to your old quarters, you return with increased liveliness to your much-cherished inability to comprehend the infinite, which you are somewhat fond of stating semi-pictorially in this way—viz. that as you cannot apprehend the circumference of infinite space which is always receding from you the more you look at it, so neither can you conceive or have anything to do with any other infinite.

We have all by this time heard of the conservation of energy, by force of which motion never dies, though to our senses no longer existing as motion; as thus—motion suddenly arrested\* becomes heat, then fire, and then by degrees everything that may be needed to make up the sum of things as they are; and this gets rid, or nearly so, of the first cause difficulty altogether; because every body must be either in motion or at rest; but the state of rest requires no first cause; and the state of motion is as simple as that of rest, and therefore motion may as well do without a first cause as its opposite, rest.

Now, strike flint and steel together, and motion you see and fire you see, and stand by a little, and a horse-shoe you see; then all that goes to the making of a horse-shoe you see, and repeat the process in other instances and all creation you see. But creation, you object, is infinite; but so also is the energy of a cannon.

\* We are reminded by an article in the *Quarterly Review* of July 1882, p. 47, on the Theory of Solar Heat, that this hammer-and-anvil suddenness is not an essential requisite, but that the same amount of heat is developed when a body moves slowly against a resistance adequate to bring it ultimately to a state of rest as would have been produced if it had rushed with sudden impulse and high velocity through the same distance and then been stopped.

ball shot from a gun, for it would go on in a right line for ever but for the contrariant energies of the resistance of the atmosphere and the attraction of the earth; and the energy of the ball you can see, for you can see the ball itself if you stand by the gun and look along the line of direction; and the ball, upon principle, is only a concrete of various energies, and, as a conscientious agnostic, what you see, that you accept; and what you accept, that you know; and what you know, that, having the whole world for your market overt, you can always dispose of to your advantage, any custom, usage, presumption or probability to the contrary notwithstanding.

Yet, with all this, we agree that the infinite could never be truly apprehended by the intellect even if presented to it by supernatural means, for then it would no longer be the natural intellect that apprehended, but the same intellect preternaturally enlarged.

But you, or some of you, look to find the infinite of infinities by the measuring powers of your own finite ideas, and are thus bound to fail; and we observe, indeed, that you generally end with an apology. You would measure the infinite, absolute and uncreated, by ideas taken from time and space, which are only particular incidents of particular created things, and cannot, therefore, be universally applicable. There is at the present moment an eternity in Heaven, of which the times and seasons, the æons upon æons of the visible universe, though co-existing, are no parts.

Beside the material infinite which you are always making so much of, and upon which you are so lavish of your "serial-correlative-concepts" expanding instances, there is a spiritual infinite, a free visitant to all, which

without defined form or sensible imagery of its own, continually lifts our finite towards its own infinite privileges, untroubled by any thought or idea of duration or space, or apprehension of change ; and to those who will read them there are sure and certain signs of this to be found at the side of many a peaceful and happy death-bed.

Eternity, it has been said, is existence or the sense of existence abstracted from the ideas of time or succession. But these same ideas are not constantly present with us and we may and do often exclude them for a space at will. There do arise within us at times spiritual thoughts or ideas whose beginnings are unseen and which are unapproachable by analysis, full born in the instant, perfect in themselves and taking no stain from without, clad in no material form, and springing from no material source, and therefore necessarily from an eternal unseen. We have above spoken of this Infinite Spirit as a free visitant, but this freedom rests with Him and not with us. We are far too unworthy of such a freedom ; but if, as is now we believe very generally acknowledged and certainly has never been disproved, there has been through all ages and out of all the races of mankind who have ever lived, one, and one man only, perfect in all goodness, from whom this spiritual visitant never departed, that is enough for our purpose ; there must be something that is not material—a spirit infinite that watches over, visits and sustains us all.

This, we agree, is not quite philosophy ; but it, or something approaching to it, has been outlined for us of late in the “ eternal within us not ourselves, tending to righteousness,” which we willingly accept, but not in the sense and spirit in which it is offered to us ; we accept

it, not as an impersonal eternal tending to righteousness always abiding within us, but as a living spiritual visitant that leaves us not alone in our weaknesses and despondencies, but presents itself of its own free grace to guide, console and save, but which, if not duly welcomed and received may in the end, "not being ourselves," leave us, to return no more.

But in the argument this grace is not accepted, and the sole direction and government is asked for the reasoning faculty ; and, the claim being for sovereignty, the strife is internecine—the sling and stone against the sword and buckler.

Well, after his fashion, said a certain professor to the commencing student seeking directions for a course of study, First logic, then metaphysics, and then what you will and as you will :—

"If the first be so, the second is so ;  
And therefore the third and fourth is so ;  
And unless the first and second before be,  
The third and fourth can never more be.  
He who strives to know a thing well,  
Must first the spirit within expel."

*Faust*, Act ii. scene 7 (Blackie's Translation).

And is it not so? You may pick up your firsts and seconds and compound your thirds and fourths pretty nearly at will ; and if so, can hardly have much trouble in expelling inconveniences, and, at the worst, may always create a diversion by a *tu quoque*.

"Reineike then dilated on the shortcomings of the priests, and counted priest-craft as more injurious than the craft of foxes. . . . 'Uncle' (*Ital. Zio, Tio; Gr. Θείος*), said the badger, 'I find it strange that you confess the



sins of others, when you have so many of your own to think of.' ”

The force and office of conscience must not be scrimped for the sake of snapping an argument. We appeal here to common experience. It is unworthy to confine it to the remorseful regret we may feel for a particular wrongful act presumptuously committed or into which we may have been incautiously betrayed. All acts may be forgiven, but sin must be destroyed. These wrongful acts are not the isolated things which we in our hardness sometimes take them for ; singly, indeed, they may even be repented of in the extreme, and extremes are fantastic. They are the effects and outward signs of worse things within us. What presses most intolerably on the conscience, whether we know it or not, is the sense of habitual, ingrained sin, made only the more fearful by contrast with the few scattered thoughts of good which sometimes, we know not nor consider how, arise within us. And further, if we analyse this sense but ever so little, we surely find, appealing still to common experience, that it is through sin possessing and corrupting the entire current of the thoughts, that we learn that we are in a state of rebellion of the will against some objective Power, whose authority cannot be gainsaid, and whose attribute of being the only great and good is confessed by all in the very instant of our conviction of His existence; and this conviction does at times come to all.

This conscience then, maintaining a constant though unequal sense of moral good and evil, must be accounted for ; and unless we accept it as a spiritual faculty implanted in us from the beginning, and subject to spiritual laws, we have no choice left but to take it as a continua-

tion or development of the universal law and order of the material world around us, and therefore as itself material. On this hypothesis, the self-same physical law that has caused and provided all the existing forms of the material world, must extend equally to the unseen world of thought and spirit, exclusively of all other agency, and the mind that perceives, and the thing perceived, are but forms of the same matter. In this view there must have been a time when matter existed and spirit did not, for thought and spirit without consciousness are names without forms.

We can see the wonderful adaptations in the world around us of means to given ends, and always to given ends. We can observe, for instance, the organs of sight prepared and laid up in all creatures for the perception, and so as to be accommodated to the laws, of light and colour at and from the instant of our birth.

But adaptation is one thing, identity quite another. If we say that mind is only a form, mode or action of matter, the correspondence between the two must be perfect ; there must be no excess on either side, neither of them must outrun so as to be entirely parted from the other. We all alike accept in this question the principle of means to an end, and especially so as regards the material world, which without that principle must always have been and remained for ever a chaos. But neither can we doubt that the same principle must in all finite beings equally prevail in and govern the constitution and laws of thought, and that they too work as means to some given end, perhaps not yet by us fully discerned. Alter the proportions and relations of the several faculties of the mind, and the mind itself be-

comes chaotic and we can no longer reason ; and from this we infer that we were intended to reason, but not necessarily upon all subjects. If, then, we find amid the phenomena of mind or spirit thoughts or feelings having absolutely no relation to this present material life, and tending to no material purpose, but rather carrying us far away into quite another world, we find no reason why we are to search for the elements of spirit in matter ; nor do we feel that the burden of proof is on us ; for though we may be told that we certainly see and handle matter and do not certainly see spirit, that, in our view, hardly amounts to more than being told by a man who sees, that we can do nothing but see objects, and by a man born blind that we do not see at all.

In the material world we find order everywhere, both existing and in progress. It seems probable, and, as we believe, is generally considered, that it could not be otherwise, and that any single element of disorder once admitted into the system without its proper check, would in time break up the whole scheme, and that there has never been discovered a force in all nature that has not its proper function, aim and purpose, either active, repressive or compensative, or that could be safely withdrawn. We may instance here what men of science have told us, of the *a priori* discovery of new planets invisible to the naked eye : a certain perturbation was observed in the planetary system, which could not be accounted for ; it was calculated that a planet in a certain position and moving in a certain orbit might by its counter attraction set all things right ; and then it was discovered at last that such a planet had been there invisibly all the time.

Accepting thus order in the material world, we are free also to accept development, not indeed quite in the sense in which it is offered to us, but as steps in creation which we are enabled and permitted by the Creator to some extent, perhaps for the quickening of our devotion, to observe and trace : and we do, and we trust to our profit, so accept it in material things ; nor are we so ambitious as to be at all depressed by the modern objection of finality, viz. that as we cannot see the end to which the principle is carrying us, we are rash and presumptuous to attempt to pass any judgment on the means.

It is said that there is the same or an equal development in the phenomena of mind, as it rises from or above sensation, and that thus even our opinions are developments. We may certainly often trace the course of opinions in the spoken thoughts of the highly intellectual. We may sometimes almost see them developing if we watch the countenances of very stupid men ; we may catch the very moment of the arrival of the fixed idea and the final departure of all others, the "rest and be thankful" bench of the over-burdened *quasi* mind, from which it never arises again.

But this is progress, rather than development. The constitution of the mind, however affected by circumstances, has never changed ; the intellectual faculties, severally and in their relations and modes of action, are the same as they have always been. They sleep but are not absent in the savage. If you take a child out of savage life, and educate him in the principles of civilization, he will grow up, not perhaps perfectly, but more or less in or towards the likeness of his teacher, not

solely from imitateness, but because it possesses in their proper degrees the same natural faculties.

It must be remembered that we have neither right nor authority for treating the visible material world as the universe. The phrase "world or worlds unknown" is not an idle one. In the material world in which we live we find order and arrangement everywhere and in all things, and so far as lies within our observation all more or less adapted for our use. In ourselves we perceive a will not bounded by the natural objects immediately surrounding us, and in and through that will we first meet with error and its penalties. What then, and whence this will, and what its actions and consequences?

If the earth and what it contains were our sole hope and possessions, we should expect to find ourselves entirely fitted by nature to use and enjoy them to the best advantage and learn to be therewith content; as it would be surely a vain thing to establish order and scatter treasures over all the face of the earth without providing suitable and corresponding order and power in him who is to possess them—to provide a harvest for him who cannot reap.

All this, it may be said, man possesses abundantly in his bodily organs and directing mind. But if that were all, why should he be so sorely let in his task of subduing the earth as the pains and penalties, the excessive toils and grievous sufferings of his life from day to day so clearly avouch him to be? It may be answered and truly answered, that it is for his ultimate good that he should so toil and suffer; but that ultimate good is his moral good, and morality in its full perfection reaches

far beyond all earthly concerns, all earthly teaching and discipline; and again too it may be asked why, seeing that all these pains and penalties are in themselves such hard and cruel things, might not some less afflicting means have been devised for effecting and assuring this moral good. The existence of pain is a crucial test, a mystery which by the light of nature we have never been able to solve, and has confessedly never been approached by any heathen philosophy; but it has a secret history of its own plainly written in the pages of a book open to all; a book declaring a law "pure and undefiled, converting the soul," speaking with an authority of its own, too high for human challenge, inviting, attracting the attention and binding the consciences of all. There may be in it some things hard to be understood, such as evil examples of accepted men which we are not to imitate; but we can always read the truth between the lines, and so reading it these very examples do but the more clearly attest the integrity and greatness of the whole. And let us add with regard to these evil examples, that the Jews were a people selected out of all others to work out the ultimate regeneration of mankind at large, for which purpose high privileges were conferred, and severe ordinances laid upon them, in addition to the common moral law then and always equally binding on all men alike. With respect then to breaches of the latter, they were in the same position as ourselves; each one of them sinned before God and against his own soul, but might be restored to favour on truly repenting; but whoever among them offended against the special ordinances, was a direct rebel against God; he obstructed the Divine purpose and must be removed. In this we can surely

see why David, always zealous for the ordinances, was restored after his heinous offence in the matter of Uriah ; Saul absolutely rejected for his presumptuous and unlawful sacrifice.

But to resume ; why should this directing mind of ours be at once so defective and so redundant, so tame and yet so refractory, so fertile in resources and yet so fallible, so creative and so destructive ? If we allow that it is in the main sufficiently adapted to answer all our earthly needs, and to bring to perfection what are sometimes called the arts of life, why should it be so much more than all this ? Why should it be so abundantly stored with thoughts, feelings and ideas which assist not these needs, and have no relations with these arts, but often rather reprove them ? Nothing is good in or for us that does not lead to yet greater good ; but the material arts without a supervising check do not effect this but rather tend to selfish indulgence, which is evil ; then this supervising check must be the moral sense, without which there can be no such things as morality or immorality.

We are ready here for all the usual copy-book commonplaces, such as the sayings of the seven wise men of old, from which it has been conclusively settled by some, that the real moral check is only prudence, which the pagan Juvenal, according to one reading, treated as the dethroner general of all gods, and that this prudence is only a just apprehension of the consequences of our acts. But we appeal to experience. The beginnings of evil, of excess for instance are not seen, and the truly temperate man cannot therefore have become such through prudential considerations, drawing him away from temptations which he has never felt, and which are no temptations to

him, the truth being, that he is hardly conscious that he is temperate, and never thinks of reasoning about the matter at all.

Why, we must again ask, should we have such various and exalted ideas and faculties as it is manifest we do possess? Why should we have so very much of that king of shadows, the ever-restless far-reaching propagandist, the imagination, so powerful alike for good and evil, so impartially available for pain or pleasure? If the beauties of nature so highly delight us, why does over-realism in the delineation of them offend? why is it that we find beauty in the representation of that which itself has no beauty? Is it not because there is something underlying our surface ideas and thoughts far nobler than themselves? Why again should we so much excel the lower fauna of the common earth, only to live earthly lives and die like them? Why, and mark this well, should we be made so as to care so much about one another? Why should we so much affect the good Samaritan in our speech and writings? Why, if we must live in society, should we have so very much more sentiment than a herd of bison who also must live in society? What need have we of such transcendental morality as some now and then aim at for themselves and at all times enforce so impressively on others, if that more than superfluous morality works us nothing but hindrance in our earthly secularities and there is no further purpose for which it can work? All material forces have their several missions which they carry out very fairly to the letter; then must not this extraordinary morality, so evidently the effect of a strong spiritual force also have its mission? and are we not



witnesses one and all of us, that it fails in that mission through the extreme perverseness of our own earthward tendencies ?

We ought, it is said, by this time to give way on the question of pre-historic man ; and you allege that facts are stubborn things, and present us with a skeleton, which you say, and perhaps truly enough, must have been somebody in his time, and which you tell us was found in a spot where incontestable geological facts prove that it must have been lying undisturbed during more than six thousand years many times told, and that consequently the Mosaic account of creation cannot possibly be true.

This is a great scare to the comparatively uninstructed, who, not fully apprehending the premisses, and unused to the tides and eddies of controversy, and too often taking "yes" for granted, simply because they do not know how to say "no," run off at once into apologies for their own hitherto received belief in the scripture narrative, by throwing over and distinguishing away as much of it as they think they safely can without altogether losing their credit and privileges as believers, ending thus by getting themselves whipped by one party, flogged by the other, and disowned by both.

We do not feel ourselves bound as yet to accept either the fact or the conclusion as stated. The burden of proof is on the skeleton, a claimant of doubtful antecedents, and it is the right and office of the Court of Letters to require him to give some account of himself, to ask him who and what he was, where he came from, where he last slept and generally what he has to say for himself.

We think we may fairly enough divide the questions. Do you certainly find natural causes now in operation, sufficient in the ordinary course of things to have produced these incontestable geological facts? Do you certainly know that these causes have never at any time been in action under different conditions? or that there have not been other causes in operation, that could have produced them? Until you answer both these questions plainly, accurately and particularly, we are not bound to accept your conclusion.

We have no thought of entering here upon the great Deluge question. It is not so very many years ago, that the question was in full swing among men of science, and it is not now questioned that, whatever the causes, there have been heretofore one or more exceedingly great convulsions of nature and breakings up and shiftings whether sudden or gradual of the surface of the earth; and chiefly perhaps through the agency of water, "the softest, brightest, purest and most untameable of elements" the times, extent and causes remote and immediate of which are to us as yet but imperfectly known.

The effects of the breaking of even an artificial dam have often seemed prodigious in our eyes, and left wide and lasting effects; while those of natural inundations covering whole countries at once baffle our most ambitious calculations. But a universal or general deluge (which we cannot ourselves give up) sufficing to destroy all the races of mankind, who had been increasing and scattering on the face of the earth for upwards of fifteen hundred years, and its ensuing subsidence, would have been almost equivalent to a new creation. We cannot

speculate either on the causes or effects of such a boundless catastrophe. We agree that we can only reason safely from causes which we see now in operation, and these tell us neither how it came nor how it went. But neither does a partial flood always disclose much of its cause. We must reckon up our means a little more closely. A Brobdignag man, say, not more than some fifty or sixty feet high, would be the most pitiable of objects, being out of all proportion to our natural forces. Bearing in mind the immense insensible strain on the muscles which it requires to enable us to do the most trivial acts, he would, if made of flesh and blood, by the existing law of dynamics hardly have power to raise his hand to his mouth or lift his foot from the ground, and should he happen to stumble over some such object as the Temple Bar Memorial, he would be safe to fall, and in that case, having so far to drop, must inevitably fall like a house, and break his unhappy limbs past all surgery. Then may there not be something of a Brobdignag element in these geological arguments? We do not reason much about this Brobdignag man; why should we attempt so much with these transcendental geologies, seeing that at the best they can but be slightly conclusive, slightly the reverse, slightly not full home to the point, and slightly all these at once?

In our view, which we admit to be doctrinal, a universal or general deluge sufficing to work the destruction of all life upon the earth, must have been as truly miraculous as the creation of that life itself; protesting only that, believing as we do in an overruling Providence in all things, the "setting of a bow in the cloud" though so familiar an object, and not then beheld for the first time, and

effected by the simplest of natural agencies, must, if called forth for the special occasion, have been as much a miracle as the deluge itself.

We know pretty well by this time why it always rains in certain parts of Scotland and never in some other countries, why in slips and showers in some places and whole seasons round in others. But unless you know and can fully measure all the blended natural forces at work in such mighty catastrophes as without exaggeration any partial deluges must have been, and can calculate beyond the chance of error their limits and effects, you cannot certainly pronounce that your skeleton may not have been a drift of one of your own scientific convulsions of nature that may as well as not have occurred within the Mosaic period, or claim to present him to us as a crucial test. The premisses are at present unascertained, and the question does not rise above the level of one of conflicting probabilities in which the evidences on each side are the same in kind.

But even if you could do all you propose in this matter, even if you could convince us that he must have been a living thing long before the Mosaic date usually or upon any reasonable construction adopted, that would not prove him to have been a man such as Adam was, though he might possibly have been a man such as Adam was not, that is, a living creature found in the form and figure and with the organs and physical attributes of a man, but wanting the "breath of life," the living soul, and in this state at last dropping out of the world under the "non-survival of the unfittest" clause.

We have ourselves the strongest distaste to such an hypothesis, which is however in various shapes, not un-

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frequently met with. We do not need it ; our tide does not set in that direction. We would no more think of accepting it than Malvolio, in his chains and darkness, would the Pythagorean theory concerning the soul of his granddam ; and mark, too, how simply and grandly the poor baffled dupe in his trouble reproves the sham Sir Topaz : " I do think more nobly of the soul, and can by no means accept it." In the same way do we think more nobly of man, and believe that he was created perfect in all his faculties, with a mission and a duty which he can never disclaim.

But we have to attend to others, who, professedly more humbly-minded, are by no means less peremptory. These tell us that they are free from all prejudice, and have read our Scriptures with great attention ; and that they find in them some things, such, for instance, as the last six commandments, the principles of which, with a few qualifications, they highly approve, and have freely paraphrased among their people here and there with some success ; but that they also find in them mention continually made of certain things underlying the whole, beyond their powers of conception, such, for instance, as an eternal spirit and personal creator, whom they have never seen, and facts and experiences of which they can discover no natural causes ; and that their minds, which they fearlessly assert to be representative minds, are so constituted that they are unable to accept anything which they do not entirely comprehend, and that they feel therefore bound in reason to require positive knowledge on every subject, and can by no means in any question rely on belief, which is always subject to error, and error is not always profitable.

To these we would answer thus : you do in this disclaim a liability and flinch from what you can by no means avoid. You each possess a mind that receives impressions which it conveys to your consciousness, and by these impressions you are guided at every moment and in every act of your life, and you cannot, by coining words and giving nicknames to and seeking to classify these impressions, in the least degree qualify their effects. Know or not know what you may, you cannot help yourself ; call them what you will, you must follow as your impressions guide. If they say, believe and do this, believe and do it you must, and believe and do it in all the affairs of life you always do.

These impressions are thus elements of our lives, and if of our lives, then also of our duties. They are not all intellectual nor all emotional, but in their healthiest state act well together to what is truly one given end, the discovery of truth and the conduct of life, the which, unless they do, it can be well ordered with none of them.

You, the agnostics, would make this a drawn battle, and there an end ; but there is no such thing as a drawn battle or the briefest truce in these questions ; no, not for a single instant.

As the light of the sun is the perfect blending of all the prismatic colours, so may spiritual light or truth be taken to be the blending of all means of assurance. "There is no such thing as a shadow on the face of perfectly clear water. What seems so to us is a reflection caused by something held in solution dimming the purity of the water, or by the side or bottom of the vessel containing it. You may easily try this with a glass of clear

water held in the sun, and viewing it across the surface. Place a slip of white paper to float on the surface, and you may see the shadow of your finger on the paper, but not on the water."—Ruskin's *Arrows of the Chase*, vol. i.

Again, at sea on a bright moonlit night, what you see is a bright line of light on the surface running from the direction of the moon towards yourself, and following your movements, all the rest of the surface within the visible horizon being comparatively dark. But it is absolutely certain that the whole of this seeming darkness is in fact as brightly illumined as the line you perceive, although no mortal eye has ever yet seen more than that single line at once; and this, we may observe, is by all accepted as a truth, though never yet beheld and resting for positive proof on an infinite series of shifting lines of light.

But there is yet another light; that living one which shines for ever throughout the whole spiritual world, and vouchsafes its several ray to the opened eye of the soul of every one that enters into our world, that particular ray being unseen by all the world beside. Then why is this spiritual light, comprising thus an infinite idea, though perceived by each of us only partially ray by ray, not to be accepted as a true and certain fact?

We pronounce a polished bar of steel to be perfectly smooth; and so it is to us by sight and touch, but viewed under the microscope it is rough and full of inequalities, and it is well understood that the most skilful workman cannot turn out a perfectly smooth bar, and that, being a work of art, there is really no such thing possible; and yet we possess and act constantly on the idea of such a thing, that is, of a fact we can never reach.

A sophism is a specious argument having the appearance of truth but leading to falsehood. Sophisms were practically reduced by Aristotle into eight classes. The 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' *in voce* Sophism, follows this up by referring us to Hume's 'Essay on Miracles' as containing good examples of most of these classes, besides others not definitively arranged. Perhaps the most favoured device in framing these hypocritical, hypercritical error-marvels is the taking advantage of the unavoidable ambiguities of language. The old sophists counted on these as harbours of refuge in stress of argument, and with that view made catalogues of them as we do of political parties, giving names and additions of honour to their favourites, as thus: first, the "Reaper"—Either you will reap or you will not reap your corn to-morrow: if you will reap it, you have no will or choice, you will reap it: if you will not reap it, again you have no choice, you will not reap it: but you must do one or the other; and it is in your own free will to do either, but if you have no choice you can do neither. Here the equivoque is in the word "will," which may express either "choice," which is undetermined, or "consequence," which, though as yet unknown, is certain. Next, the "Crocodile":—A woman on the banks of the Nile besought the crocodile to give her back her child which he had seized; the crocodile answered that he would truly do so if she would truly tell him whether he would give it her back or not; shall the woman get her child back or not? if the woman says Yes, the crocodile says, No, you are wrong, and keeps the child; if she says No, the crocodile says, Yes, you are again wrong: then what of the child? Next, the "Electra":—Electra knew her



brother Orestes ; but he was standing before her and she knew him not. Here the equivoue is in the word know. Again, the Positive :—Epimenides said that Cretans always lied : *Κρητες αει ψευσται* ; but Epimenides was himself a Cretan ; therefore, if he spoke the truth, he lied.

There are many others of these in store where these came from, but we will only take two for the present, one from the ‘ Essay on Miracles ’ above referred to, the other from ‘ Touchstone in the Forest of Arden.’ Says Hume in the former, “ We know from experience that the laws of nature are invariable ; on the other hand, testimony is variable and often false ; but the truth of miracles rests solely on testimony ; therefore they are not to be believed.” But the experience he speaks of is testimony, for we only know that the laws of nature are invariable from testimony, as our experience only reaches to those few facts which touch ourselves or pass before our own eyes. If Hume had said and established that testimony was always false, that might have been a little but not much better ; as it is, his position is simply addled, and only fit to pitch into a crowd, who have always, except in these times when the Queen passes, more mirth than discretion.

Again, Touchstone in the forest propounded from his dial that it was ten o'clock, and that in another hour it would be eleven ; but he could not on any sound agnostic principle have known that it would be so ; he had had no positive experience of the fact, because it had not yet happened, and he had no better or more positive grounds for his conclusion than Hume had for his. If, indeed, he had said that it was then ten o'clock, and that an hour

ago it had been nine, that would have been well enough, for he had positive experience of the fact, and knew that it had been so ; only the tale which he said hung from his dial might have been a little less precious than the one he did not tell us, as the past, which we know in part, must concern us less than the future, which we do not know at all.

But the pride of reason, like all other pride, goes before a fall. The wondrous Diderot, the great apostle of all unbelief, was found by Grimm one day attentively regarding an ear of wheat and a blue corn-flower which he had plucked out of a field in passing. Grimm asked him what he was doing. "I am listening," was the reply. "But who is speaking to you?" "God." "Indeed!" "It is in Hebrew ; the heart understands, but the intellect is not raised high enough"—but then he threw away the wheat and the flower, and was presently all himself again. This is a sort of calenture or home-sickness to which we believe nearly all wanderers in unbelief are liable. Even Voltaire may have had his secret reservations at times. No one positively knows what he meant by his celebrated *l'infâme*, whether it was to be understood as applicable to superstition personified, or to our Lord Himself direct ; but we suspect that he highly enjoyed the equivoque.

We do not say that knowledge and belief are the same things. We know that snow is white, and we entirely believe what a credible witness tells us, but the impression on the mind is practically equal in both cases, though we accept the one directly through the sense of vision, the other through tried and approved means.

But we speak of belief here in its general and better

sense, to denote the persuasion or assent of the mind to the truth of any proposition by whatever means produced, and not in its more restricted, technical, judge and jury sense, in which it is applied to assent founded on the testimony of a witness or witnesses, in which latter sense alone it stands practically distinguishable from knowledge. Taking it, then, in this larger sense, there are many subjects and many occasions in which belief founded on testimony seems to have rather the best of it. We give you an instance of some well-accredited fact : you cannot accept it because it rests on testimony. But you accept (or at least once accepted) astrology as a branch of positive science, and then you cast a nativity or consult the stars according to the rules of art, and then you accept our fact, rejecting our testimony.

Faith is a different thing from belief. We may entirely believe a man's veracity, and yet have no faith in his wisdom or judgment so as to be willing to accept him as a teacher or guide. But in proportion as our conviction of his wisdom, goodness and power strengthen, so does our faith in him increase, until it rises to the full height of the doctrinal faith of the Church, and to a sense of a perfect obligation to leave all and follow him. If this were not open to the objection of being doctrinal, what would become of philosophies at large ?

But, after all, what does this, what does anything signify ? Hume, in his 'Treatise of Human Nature' has proved most implacably two points : first, that all that is called human knowledge is only probability ; and, secondly, that this probability itself, when duly examined and put to the test, sublimates or vanishes by degrees and leaves us at last no evidence at all of anything. This

he does by the use of something like what was known of old as the Achillean argument, which is this: "If there be any such thing" (said an ancient sceptic) "as motion, the swift-footed Achilles could never overtake an old man on a journey. For, suppose the old man to set out a thousand paces before Achilles, and that while Achilles travelled the thousand paces the old man has travelled five hundred; when Achilles has gone the five hundred, the old man has gone two hundred and fifty; and when Achilles has gone the two hundred and fifty, the old man is still one hundred and twenty-five before him. Repeat these estimates *in infinitum*, and you will still find the old man foremost; therefore Achilles can never overtake him; therefore there can be no such thing as motion."—*Reid on the Mind*, Essay 7.

Geometrically, the argument appears to come to this: because we cannot construct a square that shall be exactly equal to a given circle, there can be no such thing in or out of nature as a square equal to any circle given or not given. The way Hume applies it is this: "In every judgment we ought to correct the first judgment derived from the nature of the object by another judgment derived from the nature of the understanding. Then, beside the original uncertainty inherent in the subject, there arises another derived from the weakness of the faculty which judges. Having adjusted these two uncertainties together, we are obliged by our reason to add a new uncertainty derived from the possibility of error in the estimate we make of the truth, and the fidelity of our faculties. This is a doubt on which, if we would reason closely, we must give a decision. But this decision, though it should be favourable to our preceding

judgment, being founded only on probability must weaken still further our first evidence. The third uncertainty must in like manner be criticized by a fourth, and so on without end. Now, as every one of these uncertainties takes away a part of the original evidence, it must at last be reduced to nothing. Let our first belief be ever so strong, it must infallibly perish by passing through so many examinations, each of which carries away something of its force and vigour. No finite object can subsist under a decrease repeated *in infinitum*; and thus we must come at last to a total extinction of belief; therefore a man who would govern himself by reason must believe nothing at all."

It seems to follow from all this that belief and knowledge are, as mental affections, strictly analogous to the sensation of tickling, which is neither pain nor pleasure, leads to nothing, and may be repressed by a mental effort.

Now we should like to test Hume's conclusion with an instance of our own upon agnostic principles. Once upon a time, when George the Third was king, Dr. Barrett, a Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, a very learned man and of retired habits, went out to take his constitutional walk, and in the course of it observed in an inn yard a very fine bird such as he had never seen before. He inquired what bird it was, and was told by the ostler that it was a turkey. He did not quite believe the ostler, and on his return home consulted a book on Natural History, in which was a picture of a bird there called a turkey, resembling the one he had seen; whereupon he entered the incident and what the ostler told him in his diary, concluding in set terms that "he found that the ostler

was right." Now, the only positive fact in this case, if any, was a bird ; all the rest was only testimony ; and to find is to know, for we cannot find what does not exist, or what we do not actually perceive. Then the question is, whether the Provost was on sound philosophical principles justified in making his entry in such positive terms, and did he or did he not, on that day actually see a turkey, or are we or are we not bound in reason to doubt the fact ?

Now test it by Hume's list of uncertainties ; the first uncertainty is in the object, that is the bird, whether it was a bird or not : the next is in the Provost's judgment, and his means of forming it, which means in this case were all only testimony ; then first, the ostler, may he not have been mistaken ; was he necessarily truthful ? and if truthful, how did he become so ? was he dull or intelligent ? was he religious or enlightened, and if enlightened to what extent ? and if religious, was he low church or high church ? and if low church, how did he wear his hair ? and if high church, to what extent was he ritualistic ? had he ever been a thurifer or acolyte, and what were his views with regard to a church establishment ? was he ever sober ? then as to the book on natural history, what book was it ? was it Buffon's or Bingley's, or Goldsmith's, or Æsop's, or Miss Bird's ? was the picture coloured ? or was it plain woodcut, and not by Bewick ? There are two phases of a turkey, one when he is angry and threatening, all waddle and feathers, the other when he is running away like an eel-skin ; then, in which of these was he represented in the picture ? and may it not have been after all that what the good Provost saw was a Parish Beadle beating

bounds on Ascension Day? All these causes of uncertainty must surely bring the question of probability close up to the annihilation point. Then which of the two will you accept, Hume or the Provost, bearing in mind that you cannot accept the latter without walking over the body of the former?

- But whatever may be the outcome of all this logical
- circus-riding, glitter and tinsel of his, Hume was a necessity of his times and position, and must have said and written exactly what he did say and write, and never could have said or written anything else. Failing altogether as a good Presbyterian, he was bound by temperament and occasion to become a good sceptic; and if so, then of course, with his great natural gifts, a very eminent one; and being such, could not possibly avoid having in some way to dispose of Berkeley, and this, as he found he could not otherwise confute his theory, he did by pleasantly annihilating him and everything else, that is to say, Berkeley having maintained that matter has no existence except as an idea in some mind, Hume insisted that this could not be, because there was no such separate concrete as mind; that there was no step or interval between ideas and mind, and that nothing really existed but impressions and ideas, and that what we called mind, was only a bundle of such impressions and ideas without any subject, each idea being perfect in itself, and its own subject and consciousness, something like its antagonist, the supposed Protozoon, a primitive atom with a principle of life.

Yet in all this Hume was not so very far from Berkeley himself; for his ideas and impressions must have had a First Cause, and if we, those ideas and impressions, only

exist by, and in that First Cause, it matters little what you call us.

It is true that Hume did in the end enter a sort of caveat against his own Achillean argument, conceding that there is or may be such a thing as belief, but that it is more properly an act of the sensitive, than the cognitive part of our nature, which as coming from him reads to us something like a yes, with a good deal of no in it.

We may see presently of what account the sensitive part of our nature is in philosophy. Hume, with all his cheerfulness, was always sternly consistent in the cause of *nihil ad rem*. If he had been Pope at the time with a sufficiently strong secular arm at command, he would have been bound, enlightened as he was, to have first burnt Galileo for his presumption in stating positively the one thing, and then to have turned round and burnt the Grand Inquisitor immediately afterwards for his equal arrogance in stating positively the other ; and he was a man of such humour at all times that he would very probably have done both, especially the last.

But descending a little from these more exalted uncertainties to the more manageable question of the differences of our assurance founded on belief, and those founded on positive knowledge, do you not go a little too far for your safety, or even your existence as a reasoner? Are there such things for you as positive yes, and positive no, anywhere? are they not to you necessarily, always, everywhere and in all things, synonyms signifying nothing?

What you see, that you apprehend, and that you know. But what if that which you thus know is not true? There was a time when we saw the sun rise out of the sea, and



knew by your rules that it revolved round the earth ; we now see the very same sun rising out of the very same sea, and know that it does not so revolve.

If you would know a thing that is clearly within the range of your natural powers of apprehension, but which you do not yet know, you collect and arrange your premisses and draw your conclusion. But how can you reason at all ? By your own rules, if among your premisses, and the more you multiply them the worse your chance, there be a single one of them based only on belief, such also must be your whole conclusion, and you are bound in consistency to reject it. You have set up your ladder to learning, but have purposely broken so many of the steps that it is unclimbable. A well-ordered argument admitting reasonable probabilities, may instruct as it runs even though it fail in its main conclusions. But this privilege you in your pride refuse, and not seldom with contumelious words.

Your demand for positive knowledge in all things must at times bring you into sore straits. You have lived in and never been out of the heart of London all your life ; and there are trees growing near you, and the leaves are black, and I tell you that in other places the leaves are green ; but you reply that you have no experience of green leaves, and that my testimony is less than the direct evidence of your senses, and that you cannot positively know or accept the fact that there are such things as green leaves, until you see them ; so that if you happen to be under penal servitude or bed-ridden for life, you never can know whether there are such things or not. This you will say is an extravagance ; but if so, it is only a more or less extravagance, and in your

fantastic philosophy the more or less extravagances are necessarily infinite, being in direct proportion to things in general.

You will accept nothing that you cannot clearly and entirely conceive through all its dimensions, and therefore you reject the infinite as something absolutely unknowable ; that is short and incisive, and just what the horse might say if asked what there was outside his blinkers. But then you must by the same rule reject not only the infinite of infinities, but also the infinite special wherever and in whatsoever form you may happen to meet with it, absolutely and without any reservation. You must reject the exact sciences altogether, because they deal, as is their pride to do, with infinite series, and are based on infinite unrealities of all kinds, without which they themselves are nothing. Even Newton's 'Principia' are only co-herent probabilities, which we accept because we acknowledge more mind-elements leading to conviction than you do ; but you cannot with any consistency do so, because they are founded altogether upon assumptions, some of which are infinite. There are no such things existing as some of those he speaks of. We know not that there is such a thing as a perfect sphere in all nature. A falling drop of rain ought of right to be one, but it is demonstrable that there are so many contrariant forces always acting upon it that it can never be any such thing. There is no such thing in nature as a mathematical right line, nor as a flying off at a tangent, nor as given directions or velocities or regularities of any kind ; nothing but perturbations and compensations, and approximations, and bewildermments, and all these you are bound to know nothing about, because

both themselves and the forces which affect them are infinite, and you can accept nothing about them as facts, except perhaps in your pride of skill the vagaries of the billiard ball you are playing with, and those in truth only *ex post facto*, after you have missed your stroke.

If you are a seafaring man your life has probably been saved many a time by logarithms, and series upon series of them have been constructed for your use, and you have accepted them implicitly, and risked your life again and again upon their correctness. But what is a logarithm? It stands for some fractional quantity running off into the infinitesimal; but what quantity it stands for you cannot, within any assignable limits, form any idea of; both language and thought fail you. Then are you not impeachable for want of principle in accepting this invisible unknown and unknowable as known, and for sailing your ship according to the rules of navigation?

Suppose  $x$  and  $y$ ; that is to say, you and myself, are standing together looking at the same object, and we both pronounce it to be such or such a thing. Then suppose that, algebraically,  $x = y$ ; then  $x^2 = y^2$ , so that if yes and no come between us we are immediately at a dead-lock. Next suppose we are asked our reasons, I of my belief and you of your knowledge, and we give them; and step by step, and word for word, they are identically the same; that is the same thing or form of persuasion has two names.

We do not, in the conduct and habit of our lives, draw any appreciable distinction between what we know and what we firmly believe. If we have once been tossed by a certain bull in a certain meadow, as Lord Lynedoch, the brilliant never-wounded, once was by an ox in a

Convent yard just after one of his great victories, we know that we may be tossed again if we give the bull the chance, and avoid him accordingly ; if we have only been told by a fairly credible witness, that he has been tossed by the same bull in the same meadow, we conclude that we may also be tossed in our turn ; and we avoid the bull with equal care in each case.

We lay our plans for the morrow with perfect assurance, because we do not in the least doubt that the sun will then rise and that we shall live to see it. But we do not certainly know this ; it may come wrong at any time. The sun did not always rise, and a time may come when it shall rise no more ; and after every rising it becomes continually less and less probable that we shall live to see another.

But what if you happen to know positively according to your rules, what you do not believe ? A ship's company one day when many miles off at sea, and far out of sight and hearing of land, heard very distinctly the ringing of church bells. Now here was the positive assurance of the senses ; but the ship's company would not accept it, because they knew how far out of natural hearing they were from land, and also that ships at sea do not carry church bells, and consequently that there could be no bells to ring ; so they argued the matter over, and, as the manner is, came to a great many conclusions on the matter. But afterwards on making the nearest but far distant land, they were told that the bells of the place had actually been ringing for a wedding or a *fête* or something of the sort at the very time in question, and then they accepted the fact ; that is to say, they accepted positive knowledge on hearsay.

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Again : a sentinel at Windsor in the good old ceremonial times of George the Third, was charged with having been asleep on his post at midnight. He averred in his defence, that he could not have been asleep, because he had at that very time heard the clock of St. Paul's strike thirteen. Now here were two acknowledged impossibilities, for the clock could not by nature have struck thirteen, and whatever it struck, the sentinel could not have heard it at Windsor. But then it was discovered that the clock, owing to some accident to the machinery, did for the first and only time in its life strike thirteen at that particular time, but that the sentinel could not possibly have known that it was going to do so. Here then the knowledge-fact and the belief-fact had got into a tangle. The clock had struck thirteen, and the sentinel could not have known it beforehand, and in the course of nature could not have heard it. But if he either did not know it or did not hear it, he could not have said it ; but he did say it : therefore he either knew it or heard it : but it has been shown that he neither knew it nor heard it ; therefore he did not say it : but he did say it, and so on. Now here is the Cretan sophism in real life, and we have Hume's uncertainties well shaken up together and bringing all things to nothing. Next, suppose you had been the officer in command at Windsor at the time, and equally determined as a philosopher and as a disciplinarian, what would you have done in the matter ? You must have done something. You could not have pleaded the infinite and your own privilege of *non compos*, for it all lay within a circuit of thirty miles as the crow flies. If you had flogged the man, where would have been your philosophy ? if you had let him off, where your discipline ?

But to return : the question lies entirely between an intelligent and non-intelligent first cause. The one is rest and finality, the latter continual strife : the Agnostic accepts neither, preferring the eddy to the stream ; the Materialist chooses the latter, and pronounces that the " design argument " leads direct to atheism ; thus going a little beyond Kant who only treats it as imperfect. The same Kant, after arguing that it is impossible to prove the existence of God, follows this up by showing that it is equally impossible to disprove it. One may forgive him much for the expression in the preface to the second edition of his *Kritik*—" I was forced to destroy knowledge, that I might make room for faith."

If we had to deal only with the first cause of an insensible material world, we might have a little more difficulty in attaching any coherent idea of personality to such a cause, or in raising our thoughts beyond an insensible necessity ; a condition altogether excluding will and design, inasmuch as an eternal mind cannot possibly be fettered ; nor could we trace the highest signs of Divinity in such a world.

But you must clear your land before you can till it ; and reserving our right to consider materialism as based only on a prejudice of the senses, and matter itself, even if a reality, only a particular phenomenon in a visible corner of the universe, we think we may be able to show where the objection to the " design argument " breaks off. We do not however in the least admit that it does in any view lead to atheism, but leave it for the present as only applying to an architect of a limited creation, and not to a God to whom everything is subject, and as unserviceable for our immediate purpose.

In what so deeply concerns ourselves we must look on ourselves as at least an integral if not a chief part of our subject, and examine carefully what we are, and what is in us. In a senseless material world there must be an active force leading to order, because order exists; in the lower and brute forms of life there must be a like but more advanced force, because in them too order exists. But then it is urged, that as these are demented purposeless existences such also may be the force that produced and moves them. Starting then from this point, at which our interest in the question begins, we find that we certainly possess in ourselves faculties far beyond those which we share in common with these purposeless and demented brutes, and with these faculties a consciousness and experience of a spiritual life and world unseen. We undeniably possess high intellectual faculties, various but orderly, and circumscribed in range and power; and associate with these a perception of good and evil, of purity and impurity, which, we maintain, is not wholly intellectual, but derived from some separate and distinct sense faculty or feeling. We may take for an instance, the stilling of a sudden fit of unreasonable anger or inordinate desire: the intellect may convince us that it is fit and expedient to do this, but the internal strife, the action itself of stilling it is wholly moral and emotional.

Unless the reasoning intellect and moral sense, being thus associate, are in perfect accord, the mind is off its balance, and nothing can be well with us; and our position here will be, that the promptings of an awakened healthy moral sense may and do continually disclose to us as sure and absolute truths, as the strongest conclusions of the purely reasoning faculties. A mind well balanced

in the sense above stated, is the greatest treasure of man, and except on such a mind truth never really shines.

But this moral sense thus breaking its way into this seemingly material case of ours, and dominating, and at times even against our will, over our entire being and consciousness, must itself have had a birth or beginning, and a first cause or source, and in the search for these, the question will have to be considered and answered, whether apart from argument we have not in ourselves indications of a living spiritual First Cause, as clear and irresistible as if an Archangel stood visibly before us and declared Him.

For this we must search ourselves thoroughly and uncompromisingly, insisting only that sentiment is as much an inseparable incident and quality of our being as the reasoning faculty ; and in this we can see no place for agnostic privileges, even though holding as we unfeignedly do, that if the full conception of the Eternal Spirit were bestowed on a created being, it would amount to a gift of divinity itself.

Beyond asking you, an Agnostic, to search out what is in yourself, we do not seek to interfere in the least with your Grand Lama state of facultied ignorance, of ignorance, that is, with a capacity but settled purpose not to learn, something (the simile is too perfect to be missed) like that of the fractious child, who will not say A, because he knows that if he does, he will next be required to say B, and then C and so on through the rest of the alphabet.

Neither should we expect much aid from metaphysics, which to us are but as the colours on the palette of a great painter, a useful study, as all artists know, for the beginner, but unless followed up by requisite skill in



applying them, of little or no avail. As a science, as the "science of the principles and causes of all things existing" it has never been very eminently successful, but until it is absolutely so at least in some one single point, may we not, considering the language it uses and the course it runs, rather count it "the art of expressing in metaphor taken from things seen and known, the perfect forms and proprieties of things unseen as they might be if they were not such as they are"?

We have before now met with the catching question, "Can that which is the cause of life have life"? To this we answer, that the cause of life if without life must itself have a cause, and cannot be a first cause of anything. If the cause of life be the collision of several forces, or the objective action of a force upon an object not itself, then indeed none of these forces can, either collectively in the one case or singly in the other have life; but in each of such cases, they are only secondary causes, and the first cause is removed a little further off and remains still to be searched for.

Why not as well ask, "Can that which is the cause of goodness have goodness"? Of goodness in the abstract, or as a quality, except as we find it in some concrete subject or as it is distinguishable in our surroundings, we, the finites that we are, can have no idea; yet it exists always, for wisdom exists though its place is not found; and it has this prerogative, that the idea of it once by any means acquired, we never again entirely lose it, and that it revisits us again and again, not as an airy vision of something that has never been before, but as an abiding living influence penetrating all forms of intelligence as they come into being and wide as the universe itself.

We do not say that the cases are distinctly parallel, but that goodness existed before created life in the cause of that life, and that as there is goodness in that life, its cause must have goodness. We think we may assume that goodness wherever found does more or less commend itself to all. There is no man so hard as never for an instant to have softened at the sight or mention of a mild and gracious act. When Bishop Heber was travelling in India on his first visitation, his native attendants brought him a leveret they had caught by the way ; the bishop caressed the trembling little animal for a minute or two, and then bade them release it, and gained all hearts by the kind and simple act. We know not that Satan himself was always proof against this feeling. He certainly was not entirely so in Milton's time. For ourselves, in proportion as our attention is drawn to it and our experience of it grows and our range of thought widens, so does our conception of goodness enlarge and become clearer and clearer for ever, rising continually towards the idea of infinite goodness in an infinite intelligent First Cause.

We will further assume, that goodness is wisdom, and that the attainment of it is the proper aim and purpose of our lives, and that it is therefore above all things necessary that we should inquire how far and by what means we may attain to it, and therein see that all implanted aids and qualities within us, both reason and sentiment, have their due place and weight.

But here we fall at once upon Agnosticism and its blockade of the ports of knowledge, in the times of the First Napoleon known as the Continental System, and like that, a policy to effect a certain purpose beneficial to

some but by no means to all, and thus in no true sense a principle. It took its rise, we think, on the downfall of oracles, something in this way. The Delphic Oracle, then the recognized fountain of all truth, had declared that Socrates was the wisest of men,—

*Ἀνδρῶν δὲ πάντων Σωκράτης σοφώτατος*

and there being at the time an antecedent probability in its favour, and the thing being popular, it was accepted as a point of religious faith. But afterwards a reaction arose against the man. It was considered that there were some things hard to be understood in what he told them, and that he was always teaching the same high things over the heads of his hearers, and that was tiresome ; and that if he had his way trade might suffer, as the silversmiths of Ephesus did in St. Paul's time ; and then it was remembered that oracles always spoke in hexameters, and being divine things could never change ; and that a wise saying thought out in oracular hexameters, could never be worthily expressed in secular iambs, any more than a Hebrew oracle could be rendered in any other language or bind any but Hebrews ; and the oracular or divine element being thus, and by other reasonable ways and means disposed of, we all know what came of Socrates.

But one oracle having thus fallen through, none could ever again be trusted. Besides, oracles were always constitutionally obscure and equivocal things, and might always be construed away at pleasure ; thus, suppose one of them to have said—"Raphael painted for Altoviti Bindo his portrait when he was a young man." Whose portrait was it that Raphael painted ? Now, the portrait,

that of a young man, is extant, and the oracle is extant. The portrait has some traits of Raphael himself, and some not of Raphael himself ; some of Altoviti Bindo, some not of Altoviti Bindo ; then whose portrait was it ? It must be that of one or both or neither of them ; and if of neither, then the oracular authority being eliminated, we cannot be sure that it was a portrait at all. In precisely the same way it has been demonstrated, as we may see presently, that the Fourth Gospel was not written or dictated by St. John.

We have a conception we do not pronounce here, whether objective or subjective, of good and evil in ourselves and in all that concerns ourselves, though we may not always in our actions very correctly distinguish the one from the other. But from the former we assuredly gain glimpses of a far-away perfection which we have learnt to call "holiness," as expressing a state or condition of the mind distinguishable from *δικαιοσυνη*, or righteousness in life, of which however it is the spring or source ; retired, contemplative, without spot, the crowning promise and privilege of our being. To this it should be, and in our best moods is, our single and most earnest aim to attain. But we are sorely let in our pilgrimage towards it ; our way truly lies,

"O'er yawning gulfs, through passes perilous,  
With crackling crags and whistling crannies drear,  
And slips and slides, and arrowy sleet, where all  
Is aching glare by turns and darkness infinite ;"

and through all these, and the far more perilous Garden of Armida, we must all pass. We have a life-long suit with evil, and we are in and despite of all our vanities,

thoroughly conscious of our weakness, and that we need continually objective aid and guidance.

You may perhaps say, quoting from our own books, "Wisdom cries in the streets, and no one regards her"; and we both of us cry in the streets and no one regards us; and the circumstances being thus equal, why is not our cry as good as that of Solomon ben David, or Solomon Eagle in the Plague of London, or any other of your prophets?" This, though you may not think it, is the entire force and outcome of all your arguments. Goodness is wisdom, and whoever is at any time drawn to adopt your prudential view of goodness, to him it is never his first impression; nor can he ever retain it if he sets himself fairly and earnestly to mark the way in which it enters into and reasons with us, and step by step persuades; and we appeal to the common experience of all, whether we are not at such times, and especially in our better moods, conscious that it is a spirit not our own that thus reasons and persuades.

"Where is wisdom to be found?" Not in our own unassisted reasoning intellect assuredly, for nothing is more certain than that that intellect makes more mistakes than it cures. Nor is it in the Pragmatic Sanction\* of any school of philosophy, for it is the nature of all such sanctions to be reversed at some time or another. Either then you must hold with us, or you must conclude that the voice of wisdom is nothing more than a delusive echo, the "image of a voice" where no voice is.

\* By Pragmatic Sanction is understood, the solemn irreversible decree of one or more Sovereign powers establishing a Dynasty. But there is commonly more solemnity than irreversibility about them.

We have shown how we have ourselves been drawn to connect these qualities of goodness and wisdom with the idea of an infinite Personality, and we are the more confirmed in our view from the special pain we inevitably suffer as from an unseen deadly scourge at every breach of their dictates, nor do we see in this what canon or law of the understanding we break in so doing.

Believers are taunted with praying for miracles which never come, with setting up in terms an absolute eternal will in a Creator of infinite wisdom and power, and which will by virtue of that infinitude can never change, and at the same time seeking to have it set aside in our individual favour to relieve us, the diminutives that we are, from some, nay, from every little mischief or trouble that may befall, or to confer upon us some fancied good at the expense and to the interruption of creation at large. But this true believers never do. They pray for a miracle which always comes. For mastery over any temporal pain, need or other adversity, they pray to their own right hands, to the sweat of the brow, or it may be, to Cæsar, and so far is allowable and commendable.

We can pray aright for nothing that does not lie wholly within the scope and limits of the Lord's Prayer; anything beyond this is unwarranted and presumptuous. In this prayer the leading petition, "Thy will be done," governs and gives the true character and intention to the whole prayer. We are to pray for this as for our own sole good, and for nothing else, for all that we can need or properly desire is included in that will. What follows is simply for aid and means to do that will; and herein we may be sure, that He who directed us to ask forgive-

ness of our sins, would not have done so, were He not ready and willing to grant it.

It is in this that we trace the divine authorship of the prayer, and this that made it of old so peculiarly the prayer of the Christian martyr rejoicing at the stake. We may presume that all believers use this prayer daily (if they can find time for it), but not always with equal intention and efficacy.

It need not however be denied that the best and most saintly of men have prayed for temporal deliverance from secular sufferings or disaster, and that they have not sinned though they may have been weak in so doing; but that is because they have done so under submission to the Divine will, expressed or implied, and in proportion to the truth and entireness of this submission their prayer has become an assisted prayer, chastened as it flies upwards by the condescending grace of Him to whom it is addressed, and answered always in mercy though not necessarily in the form asked for.

In a letter of condolence from Defoe to his friend Keimer the printer in prison, are the following lines, said by Defoe "to have been written by one whom he knew under affliction," which we give here as they may not be at hand to everybody, not being in the collected copy of his works to which I referred :—

“ Lord, whatsoever troubles rack my breast,  
Till sin removes too, let me take no rest.  
How dark soe'er my case or sharp my pain,  
O let not sorrow cease and sin remain.  
For Jesus' sake, remove not my distress,  
Till Thy Almighty Grace shall repossess  
The vacant throne from whence my crimes depart,  
And make a willing captive of my heart.”

*Notes and Queries*, 4th Ser. vol. iii. p. 422.

But they are in our view somewhat too bold, and have an air rather of meritorious determination as if man could do anything of himself, than of true humility, and must not be followed without some caution. We have a fancy at odd times, that he wrote the lines himself when he was in trouble about his "Shortest way with the Dissenters," and that the pain which he prayed might abide was the pillory, as opposed to the sin of recanting, which last he had then determined not to do, and which indeed if he had done, would have been something like recanting a victory.

We may be reminded perhaps that He who gave us the form of prayer on which we have been commenting above, did Himself in His extreme agony supplicate that His cup of suffering "might be allowed to pass from Him." But it may be observed in the first place, that had not the fact been expressly recorded for our instruction, we might well have feared to remark upon it. No merely human being, no other son of man has ever been or can ever be under like conditions; the cup spoken of was one of mysterious superhuman suffering far beyond our powers even to imagine, being no less than the taking upon Himself the penalty of the sins of all mankind except Himself who was under no condemnation, and thus praying in His own right without a mediator, and yet that with all this He supplicated not as one demanding, for he had taken the manhood into Himself, but humbly and conditionally only, that "if possible," the cup might be allowed to pass from Him, and other means accorded to save mankind, and concluding all with the yet more emphatic and governing words, "nevertheless not my will but thine be done;" so that throughout there was



in Him perfect and absolute resignation to that will, without for a single instant either rebellion or shortcoming. It was in effect a prayer that His adopted manhood might be strengthened in His hour of superhuman trial.

But there is yet a word or two to be added to this. No mortal ear seems to have heard these words of His, no living witness to have beheld His full agony, for His three chosen disciples were in heavy sleep and from that time had personal converse with Him never more until after the Resurrection, and the record of this prayer must therefore have been specially inspired for our instruction, to teach us by His example how far we may be permitted to ask for the removal of our own cups, and how we are at all times to guard and direct our own prayers.

We know not if the circumstance of our Lord's taking with Him His three most favoured Apostles to watch with Him a little apart during His approaching agony, and His frequent returns to them at intervals during His weakness, not of the spirit but of the flesh, as if in the trouble and darkness of that hour seeking the presence and sympathy of His most favoured fellow-men, has always been sufficiently kept in mind, as showing not only the intensity of His sufferings, but the true humanity of His character. It is in traits such as these, that we would look for illustration and assurance of His perfect manhood. Certainly, least of all should we think of measuring what has, not we think very happily, been called the "Manliness of Christ," by any heroic standard attainable by our own weak humanity, or of treating the natural fear of physical death as an appreciable if any element in His sufferings. But there is another far more aggressive writer, who starting with an undisguised purpose of

lowering his subject, has hinted at certain æsthetic and sentimental regrets for things precious to us, but said to have been cast aside by our Lord in His early youth. Belial in 'Paradise Regained,' Book II., in his coarser way suggested in council something of a similar kind, but was severely rebuked by the more judicious Satan for doing so.

But what is this submission we have been speaking of? What is resignation? It is not fortitude, for that is proud; nor courage, for that resists; nor stoicism, for that is fantastic; nor obduracy, for that is sullen; nor temperament, for it is found in all; nor is it in anything that we can find consistently formulated in any school of heathen philosophy. In our view, it is a cheerful submission under trial of our own will to that of another from whom we have received all the good we have ever known, whose right to afflict we recognize, and of whose continued absolute justice and mercy we are even in our deepest afflictions fully assured, not by report only, but through an entire consciousness of His actual though unseen presence with us, to sustain, console and in His own good time to heal. If any one of these terms be wanting there can be no true resignation.

But it is fair to hear what is said on the other side in these questions. "We know nothing of any such presence as you speak of. Resignation is the development of courage and determination in a naturally strong and healthy specimen, in strict accordance with the world-wide principles of the 'struggle for life' and the 'survival of the fittest,' by virtue of which the Nore light and the lighthouses round our coast generally, being the works of man, the most developed of all creatures on earth, are

themselves properly to be considered as advanced natural developments, and together with the formation of coral islands, conclusive arguments for the common origin of species."

"We agree that this principle may, in this the infancy, however healthy, of true philosophy, seem at first sight a little broad, but it is simple and convenient, and must at last prevail, as surely as your widow's cruse (but that is a fable), as a due measure of oil (this is science) will, if time and occasion be given, suffice when judiciously poured on the face of the waters, to still the raging waves of the stormiest sea from one end of the Serpentine to another.

"If it be in the natural course of things that we should do and suffer, nature, whether we like it or not, will develop means to enable us to do so, and, as we maintain, without any fear of rational contradiction, by the means and in the way above hinted at. We assume with you that nature never fails at need, and never does anything in vain. We will agree for instance, because we cannot well deny, that the Israelites did once upon a time traverse the wilderness of Arabia with all their flocks and herds, and did abide there, wandering to and fro, for forty years. Now, this took place, geologically speaking, not so very long, not more than between three or four thousand years ago, and we all know that this same wilderness could not in the common course of things have furnished subsistence for so vast a host as they are represented to have been, and that unless some extraordinary means had been provided, they must all have perished. But we know that they did not all perish, but on the contrary have to this day thriven as some think inconveniently, and we agree therefore,

though we do not profess to know much about it ourselves, historical truth not being much in our line, that nature did by the exercise of a special *nisus* or tendency develope such means accordingly ; and we will assume with you that these means consisted of manna and a few quails ; that this manna was continued to them for exactly forty years ; that it always kept the Sabbath ; that it never failed the Israelites during all their wanderings until they arrived at their ultimate destination, or what you call the Land of Promise ; and that it could not be gathered in superfluity, because the natural demand was for sustenance and not for storage, and that when these ends were accomplished, it passed off into a minute sporadic germ-dust, which is probably floating around us at this very moment, ready and in store for another re-development when needed."

"But we take it to be perfectly clear on your own showing, that all this is in as perfect accordance with the ordinary observed laws of development, as the Nore Light, and not in the least miraculous, and we do not at all doubt that should another such Exodus (say of Mormons) take place under precisely like conditions, the same phenomena being again required would again appear. We agree further that the very existence of the strongest and most enduring race of mankind was at stake. If I say with George the Third, that 'born and bred in England, I glory in the name of Briton,' I do not exactly know what I mean, for I am not at all sure what my early ancestors even within historical limits were, or when if ever, they left off being Britons ; but I need not as a general rule to be told, that so and so is a Jew. Our American cousins and ourselves are notably frater-

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nizing far more than we did a few ages ago, yet they with their acquired nationality of feature and *physique*, due perhaps partly to their strong republicanism and adherence to the Monro doctrine, partly to their prairie surroundings and partly to their love of hyperbole tending to prolong the visage, are much more like themselves as they stand, than they are to their Pilgrim Fathers, whom we once in hard times sent packing from our shores, retaining only Pym and Cromwell and one or two others for home purposes, afterwards effected by them though not quite in the way intended. But the Jew, as may be seen from old Egyptian wall-paintings, and his ineradicable Semitic addiction to jewellery, bright colours and the gorgeous in apparel, is always the same, and has therefore assuredly a future of his own before him, and if so, it is not to be doubted, seeing what has already passed, that the same nature which has developed the world from the jelly, step by step up to man, will also develop everything necessary for that future, whatever that future may be."

"But the matter does not end here. This Jewish Exodus was a great moral engine; and you yourselves admit that the establishment of your own religion depended very much upon its success, and we know, for we have it on very exceptional authority, that religion has nothing to do with the worship or sense of obligation to a deity, but is only an undefined 'emotional morality,' the result of a special *nisus* leading to it. We are therefore bound in common consistency to conclude, that this Exodus with its manna and other specialities, being thus a development effected throughout under physical conditions, all morality and all religion of which

it has been shown to be the cause, must themselves also be physical developments, and nothing else.

"But *Palmam qui meruimus feramus*. We on our side have the high satisfaction of knowing that the rising intellect of the Japanese is entirely with us. Miss Bird, in her 'Unbeaten Tracks in Japan' tells us, that it is an obstacle in the way of Christian missions in that country, that the Japanese students who are educated by their Government in England or America, return and tell their countrymen that no one of any intelligence in those countries now believes in Christianity, and that it is an exploded system only propped up by the clergy and uneducated masses."—*Vol. II. Letter 19.*

"But it must not be supposed that in our best moods we either admit or deny any of these things, being of those who know when we have a bird in hand, but not that there are others in the bush whence it came. Our faculties are finite, and the more we look into them the more finite they seem to become; whereas the infinite is always growing larger and larger. We therefore upon principle dismiss the infinite with its infinite consequences, which may or may not affect us, from our consideration altogether; and as whatever we do not comprehend is of the nature of the infinite, we cannot with any consistency accept anything that we do not positively know; and yet with this positive knowledge alone we will undertake, like Archimedes if he had got what he wanted, to move the world; and we are doing so every day of our lives."

The tail of a comet is always contumeliously opposed to the sun, but the steadfast everlasting stars shine through it. This last qualification of yours is only the old

catching question, "When is a heap of grain not a heap?" where the difficulty lies solely in there being no word to express the beginning of heapdom ; but the idea itself and every step towards making the heap from unity upwards, is as plain as anything can possibly be.

We never could suppose that Hume in his altitudes, for instance, in his position of ideas and impressions wandering at large without a subject to reside in, and the absolute unsafety of all belief, was really in earnest or meant anything more than a little politic banter. He of set purpose denying all knowledge, chose absolute ignorance for his element wherein to dwell, with a view of becoming free to assume and deal with all manner of unrealities at his pleasure ; and verily he was not often wanting to the occasion. But you by stopping short of Hume place yourself in even a worse position than his, because accepting with him the absolute unsafety of all belief, you nevertheless seek to dove-tail into it a little, and when we say a little, we rather think we mean a great deal of what you account positive knowledge, not perceiving that this knowledge has either not been philosophically tested or if tested at all, has been so precisely in the same way in which matters of ordinary belief are tested, and that even step for step. We can often trace well enough the modes by which we are able to state the distinction between ideas which we are able perfectly to apprehend and those which by reason of the natural limitations of our faculties we can apprehend only imperfectly, slightly or not at all. This we are able to do by taking extreme examples, but we cannot in all cases make out where the line of demarkation between ideas comprehensible and ideas incomprehensible is to be

drawn, and we suspect that you would find yourself sorely beset to draw any such line that you would not almost immediately and continually be compelled to give up.

Suppose yourself to have been born blind and of course without any idea of light or colour, and to have suddenly recovered your sight. You open your eyes and see light, colours and objects ; but the colours you cannot name, and what the objects are you cannot in the least comprehend until you learn from those around you and your own newly-fledged experience. The objects close to you and which you have been handling all your life you might soon learn, but remoter ones would require much more study and attention. You would have to learn to apprehend distances and the relations of things. You would not at first in the least understand how that small neutral-tinted object in the distance, as you might afterwards learn to call it, could be a tree similar to the one glittering in the sun close before you. The sky might as well as not be a blue wall, and would certainly convey at first no idea of space, much less of infinite space. What effect a vision of a fair countenance would have upon you might be a matter of temperament. Whether the finest picture would be to you at first anything more than a coloured surface is we believe problematical. The effect as a whole of this your first sudden introduction to the world of sight, would doubtless be that of raising in you a sense of delight probably far exceeding all you had ever experienced before, but all beyond that would be a bright, bewildering, noiseless confusion, in which the other senses, even if they did not add to your confusion, would take no part. Then



suppose that after a very brief interval, and before you had made any appreciable way in your lesson, or had learnt with anything at all approaching to distinctness to apprehend the true nature or uses of these visions as representations of objects, you were to be as suddenly and for ever deprived of your newly-acquired sense of sight, what would be the effect of this short dream-like phantasmagoria on your mind in and through after life? You would doubtless retain some, and probably a very lively recollection of the first impression made upon you at the time, and at least of lights, shades and colours, something we may suppose like those thrown out by a kaleidoscope but without the pattern, and nothing more; and at this point, all your sources of positive knowledge on the subject would be absolutely and for ever cut off by the return of your blindness, and the only impression left on your mind would be that of a wild, purposeless maze, leading to nothing, beginning and ending nowhere, and therefore to all intents and purposes to you an inconceivable infinite. Of its relation to familiar or other surrounding objects, you could have no idea, or at most none of sufficient positivist dignity for any use you might make of it, and if you would be at all consistent, you would be bound in intellect to pronounce once for all in answer to all questionings, something in this way: "Yes, I remember something like a variety of peculiar flashes of light which I know were called colours, and I am told continually by you and others that by these lights or colours you are enabled to touch and deal with distant objects, and to do a variety of things which I cannot do myself; but for my own part, although I remember that it was very pleasant so long as it lasted, and did present to my

mind a number of very delightful ideas, and amongst others something like the sound of a trumpet,\* yet all was and is to me one infinite inexplicable maze and confusion, and therefore although it may be as you say, yet inasmuch as what you tell me is only testimony, and plainly beyond my powers of conception, and I cannot know what I cannot conceive, I am unable to accept what you with the best, or others perhaps with the worst intentions may tell me about these matters, and although aware that the things are done, I cannot but feel myself bound on principle still to hold that these alleged phenomena of sight are but incomprehensible irrelevances, and that for anything I can possibly know, and as likely as not, all things that are done, do themselves."

Again, dropping the hypothesis of the blind man, suppose you were asked if you had never had an idea of an Intelligent Supreme Creator Ruler and Preserver of all things, hating nothing that He had made, mild and merciful ever, faithful and just to teach, forgive and save, and what effect it had on your mind, what, unless you were the late Stuart Mill who alone, as he tells us, never fell away from any religious belief, could you answer other than our blind man—"Yes, I remember, I cannot forget that I once had such an idea; and there was light, and peace and gladness, and there were voices and trumpet-soundings and rejoicings, and a form like

\* This is well known to have been said by a man born blind restored to sight under the circumstances supposed above, on having some bright red object produced to him. "Colour affects or delights like sound; scarlet or deep crimson rouses, determines, invigorates the eye as the war-horn or trumpet does the ear; the flute soothes the ear, as pale celestial blue or rosy red the eye."—*Fuseli's Aphorisms*, No. 176.

that in your Apocalypse, drawing all things to it, and many other bright and glorious apparitions, and I admit that the impression on my mind was so overpowering, and in an especial manner took such entire possession of my whole consciousness, and so elevated all my thoughts, hopes and aspirations, that I was for the time deprived of all arguing power, and heartily wished and almost prayed that the idea would never leave me ; but then after a little, when I began to argue again, I found that over and around all was a seeming form of that which to me can have no form, that is to say of a personal first cause which is a thing I never saw and is beyond my natural faculties fully to conceive, though I know most other things, and so I was driven back to my old studies to make further inquiry ; and somehow, ever since that the more I inquire the less I seem to know about this same cause, and my mind is so constituted that a small doubt in it is continually turning into an infinite one, and therefore with great and unfeigned regret, I feel myself unable to accept what you with so much serenity and others with such reproachful words are continually telling me about it, and therefore with the profoundest humility, and the greatest and equal regard for yourself and those others, I remain and subscribe myself still, as to all these matters, a young and intellectual Japanese."

Except in the exact sciences, the entire holding power of our convictions is not in the dry reasoning faculty, though that faculty may have conduced to produce them in the first instance. It is but a poor truth that can be mathematically proved. In the exact sciences there is neither common sense nor very much judgment

needed, nor, as we are constituted, can there be much of either of them where there may not also be prejudice and error. It calls for neither common sense nor judgment to square the circle; it takes a little of both to abstain from attempting it. The forming and holding force of the greatest and most valued truths is in the collected faculties of the reason and the feelings in their due proportions and order. We do not mean to say that a sound and thoroughly complete and faultless logical conclusion can be, we believe it never is, contradicted by the latter, but it may be thereby well and wisely supplemented, carried on, applied and extended.

You (the Agnostics) accept and act upon positive knowledge; but where is that knowledge to be found? If you meet and converse with your fellow-man, we suppose you consider him a positive fact, because you see and hear him, and confess besides to a perfect conception of his qualities from your subjective acquaintance with your own. But how do you positively know that he is a man at all? You cannot, being yourself so intensely philosophical and addicted to uncertainty, entirely discard the uncertainties insisted upon by other philosophies, whether federal or confederate. How do you know whether he is some five-feet-eight of objective moving and talking matter, or only the like five-feet-eight of a subjective moving and talking idea in your own mind? Yet all philosophy worth speaking of will tell you that if you know this you know all things. The question of matter or idea, though it reaches the infinite, is one you cannot, though ever so agnostic, escape, without running away from all things; for such as you pronounce yourself to be, such is your fellow-man, and such is the

visible universe around you in which you are or seem to be placed. Do you not herein absolutely nullify yourself for all reasoning purposes? and how do you like it?

But you, an Agnostic at large, are now face to face with your fellow-man. What is he? You must pronounce. He is to you next to yourself, the most positive fact in nature, continually in all your ways and thoughts, one with which you are always in some way dealing, and which whether you will it or not is always dealing with you. Whether as a true objective man or as a subjective idea in your own mind, he stands or seems to stand before you the perfect likeness or double of yourself, answering thought with thought, and sometimes to your great vexation overpowering your weaker thoughts with his own stronger ones, and thus fairly dominating over your will. But further, when this happens he is your teacher, and you learn from him as from a book, and often manifestly against your will; he cannot therefore be under your control; but if he is only an idea in your own mind, he is an idea not under your own control, and together with your entire self must be under some unseen objective rule and direction, and if once then always under such rule, for you cannot tell from one minute to another when you may meet with this man-idea again, or what may come of it; but if he or yourself be under any common objective direction, the act of direction can be nothing less than a continuation of the original act of creation, and you must both be under a common Ruler.

We do not however suppose that any one who has by any manipulation of the grand philosophical *sentio ergo*

*sum*, or by any other means arrived at a reasonably full assurance of his own actual existence and manhood, will very seriously maintain that his fellow-men, whom we now venture to call by their proper name, have not also their own proper existence as beings of like nature, under the like conditions and found and fashioned in all respects and under the same rule and direction, whatever it may be, as himself. So to do would be to aim a death-blow at all reasoning, a negation of all practical premisses on any question whatever. And yet who knows what may happen?

It has been said that "the reflecting reason brings design into the world, and then admires a wonder created by itself"; that is to say, that when the beasts were brought to Adam to see what he would call them, when he named them then he also created them. This is a mere displacement of the order of our thoughts. We first *perceive*, then reflect, infer, conclude, admire; but we no more create what we admire, than we do a blow that pains us, or the splendour of the sun, or direct its course. The design we admire is altogether objective; only our handling of it subjective. But in fact you argue like looking-glasses, correct to an atom, but always opposed to the truth, and always left-handed.

Whether materialism in this great first cause question is within your agnostic exclusive rule, or how far it may be so, is no very great concern of ours; but we think we have shown that idealism fairly treated is not so. We almost expect you to be telling us that when taking soundings at sea you cannot possibly know what becomes of the lead when it sinks into the water, until you draw it back again, or that you cannot accept as a positive fact

that you breathe the atmospheric air, because you cannot fully conceive the limits of the expansion of that air, or its division from the infinite æther above it.

We conceive that Bishop Berkeley did well and wisely in presenting us with his theory of idealism, as he has been sometimes carped at for doing, not at the end of a laboured thesis, or as a point fully argued out, but as the fixed and final persuasion of his own mind on escaping from the wreck of materialism, strong and self-sustaining, yet one in which for want of common lines no direct issue could be joined with those who deny it. To those who accept it with him Idealism works out conclusively the grand idea of one intelligent Creator and Ruler, and is a fit preparation for an assurance of yet deeper and fuller import.

We who accept it are thus at ease from all the troubles and perplexities of the materialists, and are willing to accept a vast number of their conclusions and theories; not indeed in the sense in which they are offered to us, but as a sort of harmless sub-theories only, as permitted views of phenomena, and tracings of the mode of working of the one first and only cause. In this way we may on sufficient demonstration accept the monad theory, in which every monad is taken to possess in itself in addition to the coarser and insensible material one, an original but imparted element of life, and then by the collision of countless energies in small, not however in the way of scramble, but by the prevision and direction of one and the same first cause, developing at last with others into the concrete universe we now perceive. Reason and science, our servants, do indeed seem to assure us that the world became what it is by steps and stages, and in the sense

above mentioned we so accept it, and with it development, evolution, natural selection, the survival of the fittest and so on in any form that may be reasonably devised. We will thus for instance take the reasoning beaver developing from a jelly, first into a mammal of form now unknown, and then by force of circumstances dropping into its proper *habitat*, and there further developing head and tail at once, the head to contain the reasoning brain to enable him to devise how to make things comfortable, and the unreasoning fishy tail (the idea of which but for the anachronism might have been borrowed from a single-bladed screw of a modern steamer) to make them so ; the head being thus manifestly the cause of the tail, and the tail of the head, just as the sails of a windmill and the grindstone are mutual causes and effects, the one of the other, moving together to the development of wheat-flour and penny buns. In this way too we will take the seaman's theory, that the barnacle shell found adhering to his ship's bottom after a long voyage, will if let alone in due time develop into a goose with a livery more guarded than his fellows.

Idealism is thus a test question. There is no halting between it and materialism, between one mind and many mindless energies. But we are in a hard case. We are marked out for unpopularity ; even drowning men will not accept our aid. To nine-tenths of the men we meet in the world idealism is as a sealed jest-book in an unknown language ; and that is rather long odds. They do not see it in the daily business of their lives ; if they ask the policeman who is regulating the street traffic about it, he tells them to move on or they will be run



over ; they boast continually of being men of substance, and prefer wine of a good body ; they give and take blows, and find nothing ideal in them ; nor in their houses, nor in their kitchens, nor at their dinner-tables, nor in the taxes they pay as distinguished from those which they do not pay, nor always in the Parliamentary debates, nor even in the Church Lectionaries. They will not see it in the very first verse of their Bibles, where it is declared that in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth ; yet there it certainly is as we look to be able to show a little further on. If anything could ever irritate us, it would be these nine-tenths who would do it. If you mention the question to them, they do nothing but rap the table, and more or less vociferate, "There ! what do you say to that ?" and toss back their conglutinate materialized heads with a superior smile of compassion, and perhaps add with a perfect vacuity of intelligence that, "So far, they are materialists," without the slightest idea of the consequences involved in such an admission.

We all know that Dr. Johnson is said by his inevitable fantastic interviewer Boswell, to have once rapped a table and said something of the kind ; but the Doctor never argued with his familiars, who were always afraid to say him nay in anything ; and in such a case we get over our arguments very quickly, and soon run down. Besides, there is plainly an equivocal in this story of the Doctor ; for he may have said what he did, either in the sense of the nine-tenths aforesaid, in which case he was no better than one of them, or he may have spoken *en philosophe*, and really meant that the table-rapping argument was the only one in favour of the reality of matter,

without in the least intending to pronounce that it was a sufficing one, but far more probably quite the reverse.

New and startling theories seem never so rife or so eagerly asserted, as when they follow close upon some brilliant discovery in some special branch of science ; and this as a precedent for inaugurating our own honour and glory, might be well enough, were it not a certain truth that self-praise is the only sound in nature that has no echo.

We said just now that the opening words of the Bible serve to make out our case. We may observe here in passing that the proper and legal name of the book we call Genesis is "*Beresith*," by translation "*In the beginning*," being simply the word with which the book opens, and that it is thus a name of no special significance in itself ; that the book itself was the first of the five books of the law, and that they were all written for the instruction and direction, first of the Jews, and then through them of all other races of mankind. It was needful therefore that they should begin with the genesis or creation of the world in order to lead up to and authenticate that law which was afterwards to give way to a more catholic one, and so far as might be requisite to make manifest its reason, purpose and ordinances. We might take for an instance the Sabbath, the observance of which for a day of rest commends itself as a custom to the reason of all, but which as a strict and guarded ordinance for the keeping holy of the seventh day, we may perhaps regard as, however wise, still a mystery. Unless this be kept in view, the name "*Genesis*" might possibly in some degree tend to mislead, as if the writer intended

to give an account of the creation disconnected from or beyond what might be requisite for his main purpose.

We have then in this book, according to our view of it, the Creator, at the beginning, dwelling alone, a spirit, without material organs, by His will alone declared to us in the form of a decree causing the world to be, "Let light be, and light was." The words immediately preceding, "God created the heaven and the earth," are more general, and tell nothing of the mode of creation, and the same might be said of several of the later acts of the creation, if they stood alone and unexplained by any context ; but in general the form of a decree is preserved throughout, and the decree and its fulfilment are treated as one act ; thus, verse 6, "And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. 7. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament ; and it was so. 9. And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place and let the dry land appear ; and it was so."

We infer then from this, that all things which were then made sprang at the instant from the mind and by the fiat or decree of the Creator, a Spirit, dwelling alone in eternity, and subject Himself neither to time nor space, but by His own act of creation the cause of both ; and from and by nothing else ; and such as they were at that instant, such in kind through all changes of form they must have continued ever since, and still are ; and if so, then being in this sense creations of the Divine Mind they can no more pass out of or be less subjective in that Mind now than they could at the instant, or in the

act of their coming into being. If at the time nothing existed but the Creator, the creative idea, the fiat and the completed act must have been one single operation in the Creator's mind, and such also must the entire universe, seen and unseen, together with all created intelligences now be. This may be rather a hard saying, but it is easier than any hypothesis on the subject we have ever yet seen. If matter is to be excepted, what is it and where did it come from? Can it be partly an idea and partly a reality? If it be a reality, it cannot be subjective in mind; it would be a simple contradiction in terms to assert that it could; nor could spirit work upon matter if an absolute reality, without some material organism in itself capable of affecting matter, which would be contrary to the very idea of spirit and destructive of its choicest essence.

If matter always existed, there is a continuing difficulty, and we may well say *Quid faciebat* before it took its present form; but if we accept it as an idea in the Divine Mind, the difficulty vanishes. But does any one really not yet see that all this strife of so many ages, this endless controversy between idealism and materialism as now conducted is, except as regards the question of a God or no God, absolutely factitious? In dealing with matter as the immediate subject, whether we call it a reality or an idea, we are dealing with the same familiar phenomenon with all its incidents; but in this harmless-looking difference lies the great question of the Personality of the First Cause, or in plainer terms that of God or no God. If matter be accepted as a reality, this Personality with all its inherent might, majesty, dominion and power, is lessened, disgraced, forced out of sight and

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forgotten, and with this yet more evil consequence, that vast numbers of those who through want of due intellectual training are unable to follow or test the arguments, are led to accept the showy surface conclusion, and thus get entangled in consequences which they never contemplated, and which they want skill to avoid.

But we must return here for a minute, to the "eternal within us not ourselves tending to righteousness" of one of the tentative electric lights of modern literature, who by his very brightness when he is wrong, as he sometimes is, only casts a deeper shade on his subject, as he certainly does in the present instance. This specious eternal of his is but a speck, if so much, of the true Eternal, and is set by this writer in the strongest light, while its workings, effects and conditions (for there are conditions) are thrown into a darkness that may be felt. The true "eternal tending to righteousness" is not always a living force within us, but comes to us by promise, to teach us all things, to call and bring us to a faith beyond all human knowledge ; for it is in truth the Paraclete, the Comforter, the Advocate, the bestower of all good things and advancing privileges for ever. And there is none beside.

But you reject this Eternal and its office altogether ; and then comes the great unhappiness and mischief of the case. You say, and we doubt not truly, that you wish to believe, that you have given and are still giving all the powers of your mind to the question, but that you find in the end that you can accept nothing for want of positive knowledge of all. What you mean we take to be this. Belief is always distinguishable from knowledge by a varying element of uncertainty, and however

strong the reasons for believing may be, this varying element can never be wholly eliminated, but always exists ; and for this you may as likely as not quote Hume to the effect above mentioned, or indeed to any other effect.

To this we might reply in your own fashion and almost in your own words ; that conversely, this uncertainty may be reduced in a continually diminishing series by reason and instances until we arrive at a term less than any assignable uncertainty, a condition never regarded or taken into account either in calculation or legitimate argument. But we think that you do not state the case quite fairly. The question does not lie between any subtle artificial distinctions between positive knowledge and belief, but upon the force of the persuasion brought to bear on the mind, and there are other persuasives than those of the reasoning intellect and its plaything, logic.

But the question is too momentous a one for trifling, seeing that it must be decided by every thoughtful man that lives, by himself and for himself. We have already told you that there is really no such thing as doubt, and that unbelief in this question is only a form of belief, as you must believe something ; and somehow we seem to ourselves to think that the sooner you make up your mind between the two forms and pass from one to the other the better, being perfectly satisfied how you will make it up if you do but give them fair play, and that like the East India Madeira of our younger days, you will probably be improved by the voyage.

It were better if possible to reckon up our means before, rather than after beginning our outlay. It may

suffice to quote Plato's Second Alcibiades\* as our authority for this every-day paradox, being as it is a lesson alike for old and young—that dialogue, we mean, in which he makes his stalking horse Socrates seek to persuade Alcibiades not to accept the command of the Athenian army until he understood something about it.

The reasoning faculty has affinities with and is under the direction of powers or influences stronger than itself, and is no more *sui juris* than the waters of an estuary at the turn of tide. It is plainly subject to the will on which it normally to some extent reacts. The will for its own purposes incites you to grasp an object with your hand; the intellect tells you that the object is a stinging-nettle, and that you must grasp it firmly or you will be stung; and we live in a world of nettles, and therefore this is a world-wide argument.

But the will itself is subject to non-intellectual in-

\* Plato was a most painstaking writer, and Cicero was not much better. But this painstaking may sometimes detract from earnestness. What would our easy-going writers of the present day *en masse* say to this? After the death of the former his writing-tablet was found, in which the opening words of his *Politica*, *Κατέβην χθὲς εἰς Πειραιᾶ μετὰ Γλαύκωνος τοῦ Ἀριστόνους*, "I was going down to the Piræus yesterday with Glauco, the son of Aristo," were found written many times over, with only the relative positions of the words changed; such was his anxious desire for polish and euphony in all his writings.

The latter, when about sixty years of age, was in the greatest fear and anxiety about his wife and children, where best to send them for safety during the height of the troubles raised by Cæsar and Pompey, and thought of the Piræus as the best place for that purpose; and wrote accordingly to his friend Atticus, earnestly desiring to be told whether he ought to say *ad Piræa*, or *in Piræa*, or *in Piræum*, or *Piræum* without a preposition, and was so sorely exercised in the matter as to find one language not sufficient for the full expression of his emotions, concluding his letter thus: "Si hoc mihi ζητήμα persolveris magnâ me molestiâ liberâris."—*Dionysius Halicarn.* *De Structura Orationis*, s. 25, *Upton's edition*, p. 244.

fluences, not always discernible, nor always resistible, nor always carrying straight to the mark. Sir Jonah Barrington in his 'Memoirs' tells us of a man falling down an embankment and cutting off his own head with his own scythe without meaning, or as he expresses the thing, without knowing it. We cannot be sure that the will is itself anything more than the turn of tide, the cause of which is in the far-away moon ; there is always something behind that propels and governs it, and that something has always in theory or in fact many names and definitions and qualities of its own. In fine, it seems very much as if, subject to the indefeasible natural right of all men to unlimited private judgment in all things, which however is never exercised, being always controlled by circumstances, we could not do better than pronounce the will to be the insensitive effect of many hidden factors.

But this private judgment should not be too much decried, for it has an opposite that too much indulged exposes us to equal and discordant dangers ; and that is hero-worship. We should consider what we all are and what we should be, rather than what some of us seem to be. There is a mischief in this form of idolatry, for such it truly is, which needs some watchfulness on the part of all ; for excess of self-abnegation, though sometimes mistaken for modesty, may without due correctives easily lead to shiftless despondency ; and then, as our idol cannot be perfect, we may the more easily incline to account the faults which in him seem but as specks when set up against his greatness, as things in themselves excusable or nearly so, to the great easement of popular sins in general and our own besetting ones in particular.



You, or rather some of you, do, we confess, deal fairly and courageously with us in this, in so far as you do set up a scheme or schemes of your own. We on our part lay before you our idea of a Personal Designer, Creator, and Ruler of all things, to Whom, from what we see of His works and especially from His dealings with ourselves, we have learned to attribute goodness, wisdom and power infinite and absolute, comprehending all things with all their relations, consequences, possibilities and contingencies past present and to come for ever ; and you, if you be true men, are deeply moved by the grandeur of the idea, but straightway recovering yourselves, as you are fond to call it, proudly allege that your intellect does not supply you with sufficiently clear images to enable you to comprehend it, and that you feel therefore that you cannot as reasonable beings accept it. Deity is thus with you a question of degree.

But it is not to the reasoning intellect only that our idea presents itself, nor is it there that it chiefly delights to dwell. Its seat is in the entire consciousness. In all our questions of right and wrong it is with us to direct, in every thought and wish of our hearts, in every sense and faculty of our beings, and more especially in all our best and highest aspirations it is present with us always, to watch, persuade and save ; in all our holiest moods it dwells with us, not in apprehensible form but in spirit and in power, and is the troubler of the world only because the world is evil.

These are its true credentials, and without these how should the well-disposed uninstructed members of the community keep their way straight, as it is our great pleasure to find so many of them do ?

But you, or some of you, are fully equal to the occasion. You get rid of the Eternal Incomprehensible first by trying to look behind it, and then finding you cannot do that, by substituting hero- or white-elephant-worship; that is to say, admitting the actual, probable or possible existence of good and evil as the result of contrasting principles now in action, you infer from that existence your own perfectibility and set up the worship of what we believe is recognized by some as a "Divine Humanity": a time is to come when the Pard, the "Lady of the Spotted Muff," is not only to lay aside her spots, but is to become altogether

"A milk-white hind, immortal and unchanged,"

barring, that is, only the immortality.

This coming Divinity has been described as "the sum total of all the sinners of mankind, who have fought with and murdered each other through the last six thousand years, and including almost every kind of moral enormity, with bright exceptional instances of imperfect goodness and nobleness of being."—*Birks' Supernatural Religion, London Quarterly, July 1881, p. 504.*

But this has been said to be the railing accusation of an enemy, or at best a highly coloured representation of one who did not understand times and seasons, and what may be done by good husbandry in the field of morals, and we will therefore subjoin a quotation at large to serve as a summary of what has been, or can, shall or may hereafter be said by some schools in favour of this divinity that is to come:—"I speak positively and in my own right. I know the being called man well, and all his affinities and tendencies; and I know that what is

called his affinity to evil, is not an affinity at all, but something very much the reverse, subject only to an occasional slip owing mainly to circumstances, which have hitherto proved a little too strong for him; but I will give him new circumstances and then all shall go well. I agree that as he stands before us now, he is a dirty feather; but I am a feather-cleaner by profession and will set him right. He is, you say, immersed in vice and sensuality of all kinds; but I will speak sentences to him, and teach him to argue; and that will show him that his vices and sensualities are not really the pleasant things he takes them to be, and that arguing is something much better; and then having thus made a beginning, I will leave him arguing; and then after a few ages (philosophy never dies) I will return to him or his descendants, who will have been arguing ever since, and whom therefore I shall find more advanced in development, and better suited for my purpose; and then I will speak more sentences, and then I will eradicate all vices or vice-like things and tendencies of an obstructive character, and ingraft all the useful virtues I can think of, one after another, so far as the principle of finality for the time being will admit of, and thus at last present him to you as the absolute and only known outcome and future cause of good, thenceforth throughout the universe; worshipful equally to himself and all others, and calm and resigned in all things, as knowing well how immeasurably better the voice of praise sounding in his dead ear as he lies in his everlasting grave must be than the tame realities of the alleged Paradise of weaklings."

If we accept with James Mill, of whom a few words

presently, the right and wrong in conduct to be the result of the reasoning faculty solely, we must of course deny a moral sense altogether. We do not say that the former may not alone in some cases work us to a conviction of obligation to do right and to avoid wrong, but the inducements would be weak, argumentative and wavering, and the obligation not moral but intellectual. We do not say that the reasoning intellect alone in some, perhaps in many cases may not lead us authoritatively and safely to a right conclusion in questions of a moral character, but that it can do so in all we deny for reasons given elsewhere ; but if we on our side are right in our position in any one instance, the moral sense must be a power within us higher than or beyond or apart from the intellect, and thus an act indifferent in itself, is wrong in us if we doubt, because if we do it, we resist a prompting within us that is not of the reasoning intellect.

The intellect itself reads us this lesson, for among its most active and most indispensable faculties are some common to the reason and the feelings. We might take for an example the imagination. Without some share of this faculty we could not reason, for we could neither freely summon ideas of absent things nor invent. The memory is but a store of past unarranged ideas, impressions and experiences ; it requires other faculties to bring them to the light and into use ; and these are chiefly recollection, invention and imagination, which two last are akin and work much together, though not identical. The recollection is brisk, but alone makes no headway ; it does not combine or itself make use of what it finds. The imagination is wild and purposeless, re-



signing itself to whatever first comes to hand ; the invention selects for an end. We may not speak of the Solar and Stellar system as exactly a work of imagination, but if the story of Newton and the falling apple be accepted, we are not quite so sure that there may not have been a slight instantaneous touch of imagination in his tracing a resemblance between the apple that fell and did not roll, and the sun and stars which roll and do not fall ; although as soon as the resemblance was once presented by the imagination, the matter was handed over to the reasoning intellect to be dealt with, according to law and custom in such matters ; from which came the ' Principia.' The converse is now more usually the case. The man of science begins with the ideas that fall in his way, combines, invents, concludes, and then straightway hands over his conclusions to be dealt with by the imagination at large ; and hence come theories.

We have heard with our ears, and our schoolmasters have told us (we had it all by rote once) that Plato reasoned well on immortality,

“ Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,  
This longing after immortality ? ”

Now, here we may see that Cato rests his assurance of a future life, not on Plato's talk, which he does not give us, but on his own individual imaginative hope, desire and longing. It is commonly said that we can never get anything by merely wishing for it ; we must have a hope and a policy, or we soon cease to put our wish into apprehensible form, and it retires out of our view. When One declared that “ His kingdom was not of this world,” His hearers received His words with prepared minds as an authoritative confirmation of a previously awakened

hope. We feel entitled to a conviction that this hope was implanted in us from the first, partly from its indomitable strength, greatest always in our best moods, and still more from its office in inciting and aiding us continually to all that is best in thought and conduct. Without this full and absolute assurance the idea of a future life would be a purposeless and obstructive torment, and nature would have given us something in vain. The reasoning intellect as a rule assents and often very strongly to this, but it is not on that cold, overweening yet wavering and blundering faculty alone that we can consent to rest our sure and certain hope.

But what is the office and use of the imagination? What good does it do us, and how far does it advance our well-being present or to come? It pleases; that is to say, you like it because you like it. But you do not always like it; for it is unequal, and nearly as often afflicts as delights. It attends us on the broad and pleasant way that leads to destruction, but not less faithfully on the straight and stony path that brings us on to life. It is often a wayside idler, that has not yet made the choice of Hercules, and never will, for neither Virtue nor Pleasure will part with it. For good or for evil, it follows our moods for the time. It gilds refined gold and paints the lily for the happy and luxurious, and rains new plagues on the afflicted. In its worst aspect on Pagan Fury was ever worse accompanied. *Δειμος τε φοβος τε*, fear and terror, are wholly compact of it, and Death himself is debtor to it for half his terrors.

The imagination thus enters into and colours no small part of our natural lives, and dealing as it does through

the feelings with the moral sense, and being subject to discipline, is bound in the first place and above all things to the service of moral truth, a truth which singly, commands rather than persuades.

Pleasures of the imagination come as of common right more or less to all, but as a rule we court them, and they are mighty engines both for good and evil. A cultivated and chastened imagination separates us from, and raises us for the time far above the realities of common life, and by the law of habit leaves on us an impression which abides long after the immediate occasion has passed away and been forgotten. We do not live in these realities nearly so much as we think we do. Passing over mere sensualities as temporary and unworthy things, our thoughts are our lives, and we feel all of us, if we reflect at all, that our thoughts do at times range in an unseen world, to which consequently we must ourselves at least in part belong. As the senses indicate to us the visible world around us, so surely do these thoughts declare an unseen ; and as the lower senses are entirely suited to and inseparable from the body and its material surroundings, so must the higher thoughts of which we have been speaking, be suited to an immaterial spirit and an unseen spiritual world ; and our argument here is, that if there are among those thoughts, ideas wholly spiritual and that can by no ingenuity be traced to any connection with aught in the material world or its accidents (and among these ideas we may fairly place that of a Personal God with wholly spiritual attributes), the mind that perceives them cannot be wholly earthly or subject to the coarser laws of material objects or accidents, but must have its own separate source and laws elsewhere.

It follows necessarily that culture or the education of the mind that sustains these thoughts, must be a chief thing needful. But culture has a wide range and many modes, and needs direction always, and we are sore let in seeking that direction. Without clear ideas we can make no advance towards truth, and though the first acquisition of ideas is quick and pleasant, the correction of them is often laborious and difficult, and in the result disappointing ; and thus we become habitually self-accommodating and too ready to put up with the first conviction that comes in our way and happens to please us, and which once adopted generally abides with us bearing false witness against truth for ever.

If laurel and bays could but know the uses to which they are so often put, they would surely shrink and shiver themselves into aspen leaves. A great library is a great snare, and in the long run often does more harm than good, by checking independent thought and study. The admission of the books themselves is in a great measure non-competitive and by favour, and once in, there they lie side by side in long endless rows, telling of reasons and unreasons, of truths and falsehoods, of wisdoms and follies, religions and impieties, right things and wrong things, though many of them happily for mankind as mute and still as the grave for ever.

It is indeed from these books that the uninventive gather all they have to say ; but then they have nothing to say that has not been better said already, or that had not as well remain unsaid. Bibliomania has nothing to do with literature, except as being itself a small speciality of the fine arts.

The fine arts within their proper limits and under



right direction are *jure quodam divino* aids to true knowledge and understanding, and sound correctives of the imagination, and a just appreciation of them is almost a kind of morality. Why this should be so we do not propose here to speak, having had quite enough of Aristotle's Poetics many years ago, but only desire to add an independent word or two of our own.

Why does realism in art offend? In the drama especially, however true to nature and well presented, we never lose the sense of unreality, we know that what we are looking at is not an actual, nor simply an ideal, but a mimic world. We suppose that a man of high culture who had never seen a theatrical representation, would on reading a selected play of Shakespeare be affected somewhat differently from a man of equal culture reading the same play, but to whom such representations had been familiar. We think we can ourselves appreciate a Greek play fairly well, chorus and all, but how it was of old or should or could be most effectively put on the stage, we have but little conception; and thus perhaps it is that the idea we form of the 'Agamemnon,' or 'Medea,' or 'Antigone' we are reading about, approaches nearer to the true heroic type, than if we had witnessed their stage representatives strutting and sing-songingly lamenting before us in the antique heroic mask and buskin. Thus too it is that we may cordially dislike the whole *mise en scène*, and yet be often deeply and instantly impressed by some unexpected touch of nature not necessarily leading to the direct action of the drama, because we test it, not by what we see, but by the awakened living truth and feeling within ourselves. Homer may be referred to for something of this kind, where he represents the female

captives wailing in outward show for the death of Patroclus, but truly grieving inwardly not for him, but for their own private sorrows—

Ὡς εἶπτο κλαίους', ἐπὶ δὲ στεναχόντο γυναῖκες,  
Πατροκλὸν προφασίῳ, σφῶν δ' αὐτῶν κηδε' ἑκάστη.

“ Weeping she spake : her fellow captives lent  
Their ready voices in a sad ostent  
For dead Patroclus, but beneath it veiled  
Their bosom griefs, and each her own bewailed.”

JOHN STAFFORD SPENCER.

He is no true man or utterly untried in life, who has never felt the force of this within his own experience.

We will take but one other like instance, the reply of King Lear—

“ No more, no more of that, I have noted it well ”—

to the remark of one of his knights, that he had observed that the Fool, the boy Fool of that particular drama, had much fallen off since his young lady went to France, as indicating the sore but secret regret of the old king, the shadow of the approaching Nemesis, and the moral beauty of the absent Cordelia.

The serious drama becomes in fact undramatic by too much reality. ‘George Barnwell,’ for instance, is absolutely unbearable, because it is Old Bailey to the life. I remember when very young having somehow taken it into my head, that a certain respectable young linen-draper in our neighbourhood (I believe he lived to be afterwards Lord Mayor) was the true George Barnwell, and for several years never came home for the holidays without asking if he had been hanged yet.

On the other hand, ‘Marino Faliero,’ though it also

ends with an execution, being quite sufficiently unlike anything in real life, might please us indifferently well if we liked it, but the last line of the play spoken by one of the characters being

“The gory head rolls down the Giants’ Steps,”

the manager at the first representation, thought to intensify the catastrophe by rolling a “property head” down the stairs represented on the stage, to the sound of a cleaver on a block behind the scenes, and thus nearly realized the poor play to a death of hissing and uproar.

Or, take the ‘Maid and the Magpie’ (old English version, not choral), and add if you can, a real magpie; that too is unsatisfactory and for the same reason; but call it ‘La Gazza Ladra,’ and add the graces of music and singing, both of them fine arts, and if well presented, the performance delights us greatly, not only by the charms of those accessories themselves, but dramatically also, because by them sufficiently unrealized. We know indeed that innocent maidens in distress do not sing, but if they did, that is just the way they should sing, and just the way they should trim their petticoats, and just the way they ought to look.

But take a yet more realistic turn downwards; take a day’s pleasure in bygone times, a public execution of a criminal as it used to be, now compounded for by a black flag, a tolling bell, and a few quiet passers by, crossing themselves as the manner with some uneasy Protestants now is. Call to mind the unruly surging mob the outpourings of all vile places, the general gladness that somebody is to be hanged, and the special

gladness that that somebody is not themselves ; the hearty greetings on the same principle, the riot and confusion, the ugly rushes, free fights and kicking matches, the shouts and execrations, the blasphemous and beastly songs and mock litanies, the bursts of wild laughter as the hidden sin pinches, and the vice, filth and misery of all kinds ; and all this succeeded at last by if possible a worse quietude, a sudden hush, a short pause, followed by a sigh of relief as the drop was seen to fall and the criminal to struggle no more, and the fun of the day was over, and then the instantaneous and almost visible return of the seven stronger devils to all, what imagining can be worse than this reality ?

If you were to analyse this representative mass of humanity, you might find here and there a little compassion for the criminal if he died game and was neither one of the upper ten thousand nor a policeman, but not over much ; a reprieve would be felt as a wanton act of tyranny and insult of the Home Secretary, a heart-breaking disappointment to all, and if the scaffold were to fall and crush to broken limbs and death, criminal, hangman and functionaries, especially the chaplain, together at once, that indeed would be to all a thing of beauty, a joy and a memory for ever. The analysis would hardly be very much in favour either of the representatives of humanity or their constituents.

But there is a word or two to be said in their favour by both of us. You have told us that these are only dirty feathers for the time being, that they are all reasonable beings and potentially "Divine Humanities," and are now, slowly it may be but surely, marching in a

body towards that state of absolute perfection when they will be recognized by themselves and accepted by all others, as the best that can be conceived of God, and that the dirtiest rogue among them is truly God serving his apprenticeship.

Then hear us for a moment, for at one point we go further than you. The good old Bishop Ridley on seeing a notorious and desperate criminal led out to execution was heard to exclaim, "But for the grace of God, there go I." All these we have been speaking of, notwithstanding what we see of them now, are moral and reasonable beings. There is not one among the vilest of them all, that may not in an instant become as pure-minded, and as free from all taint of past and present evil, as the most exalted of saints. There is nothing in him as he now stands that is not in seeming utterly vile and bad ; there is nothing in him that may not in an instant become divinely good. But not of himself, or by his own strength. You know perfectly well what we mean, and have heard as well as ourselves of a certain "alabaster box of ointment very precious," but you plead agnostic privileges, and allege that you cannot positively know what has not passed within your own experience ; that you have never been one of these representatives, nor even at any time very much of a sensationalist, and have no need of any such very great change in yourself ; and that we too know well enough, that what we are referring to and our authorities for the same, are alike unphilosophical, and outside the conditions of the controversy ; and we are obliged to submit. But remember this ; that we on our side, have and always have had living examples of the change we spoke of, though the change

may not have been instantaneous but slow perchance as the growing of good seed ; you on the other hand have neither experience nor, as far as we can see, reasonable probability in favour of your Divine Manhood, which you set up on the ground only that you have never seen anything better than that which you at the same time confess you have never seen.

Moral truth is spiritual truth, and the moral sense is broad enough to comprehend all questions of civil conduct, but reaches far beyond it ; which unless it did, there would be no earnestness in the inquiry.

We have asked above why realism in high art offends, or perhaps more properly speaking, why it fails of effect ; we would now ask, why do spiritual thoughts arise within us at the sight or representation of things not themselves spiritual, or, as Wordsworth might perhaps have put it, when is a yellow primrose more than a yellow primrose ?

“Behold I stand at the door and knock ; if any man hear my voice, I will come in unto him, and will sup with him, and he with me.”—Simpler or less spiritual words were never uttered, more homely imagery never presented ; but we consider the occasion, the grace and dignity of Him who knocks, the sullen stubbornness of him who will not hear, the privilege offered, the rejection and the consequence, and are at once deeply impressed.

We remember to have seen long ago, a slight etching, a mere uncoloured outline, we know not by whom, of this simple but most impressive allegory. Christ, indicated by the Crown of Thorns, but with no other mark of humiliation, in the traditional robe woven with-

out seam gracefully enough disposed, has just knocked with His hand, as One who does all things gently, at a closed door, and is bending slightly forward in the attitude of one listening, His face bearing an expression of mild and patient expectation, turned towards the spectator; the subject so far not exceeding the power of art to suggest in outline, but beyond that, owing to the dignity of the subject worthily to express in its higher range impossible; the door, a dull unsightly thing set in a wall unlit by any window, is firmly closed, and crossed with withered and clinging ivy; and these the only accessories, and readily catching the eye tell us at the first glance that the door has long been obdurately closed, and suggest almost hopelessness for the future.

Now in this case both the sketch and the allegory address themselves to the imagination for the illustration and strengthening of a great vital truth; that is to say, the last call to grace, and the moral and sentiment can never wholly pass away; from the believer certainly not, for they have fallen on a prepared spirit, and even in the case of the most recusant unbeliever, either he has once believed and fallen away, or he wishes to believe but cannot, or he receives them, though not as accepted truths, for their innate beauty and force, and then by the very laws of the mind they must again and frequently re-visit his thoughts, and may at last soften that spirit of recusancy which alone, all told, is the cause and strength of nearly all scepticism; that is to say, the spirit to deny comes first, and the arguments afterwards.

On the other hand, there is a well-known finished

picture by a most highly gifted, but noted as a somewhat over-realistic artist, the "Light of the World," in which the same subject is presented under an entirely different mode of treatment. The name itself would be a mistake even if the work itself were not a misreading of the subject, for it is not as the "Light of the World," though such He undoubtedly is, that our Lord is presented to us in the allegory, but as the offerer of grace; and this the true moral and sentiment of all, is dispersed and lost amid a crowd of orthodox accessories selected from the thirty-nine articles, each no doubt of deep importance and demanding all attention in its own proper time and place, but as rendered in the picture adding nothing to, but rather by distracting the attention lessening, the effect. What is to be expressed is the grace and dignity of the Divine figure, and the sullen obduracy of the unseen man within, the sad but perfect type of ourselves. With our minds set upon this, we care not to be drawn aside to contemplate the æsthetic splendours and position drill of these wonderfully delineated but importunate accessories; the apples of Sodom and rank earthly vegetation trodden under foot, the lurid earthly light below in excessive contrast with the pure heavenly light above, and all the rest of them. What need have we of that gaudy lantern which cannot be accepted as the Light of the World, for it shines through chinks and casts shadows, and indeed with a happy inconsistency the principal light is made to proceed from above.

All these rather tax the memory and invite controversy than make quick appeal to the feelings. The only accessories needed were the closed door and the



ivy ; the door is there, and the ivy is there, but the latter so hidden by these obstructives as to be hardly perceptible at first sight, or indeed without close examination. Nor is the visible figure quite satisfactory. He has knocked and is listening for an answer certainly, but rather as one summoning to share sorrow and suffering, than inviting to peace and deliverance. Should we be visited by such a form in our dreams we too should close our doors ; we should awake affrighted, and almost despair. The countenance is wondrous certainly, both in conception and expression, but it is not the conception and expression we desire for the occasion ; it is that of the suffering Christ, not of the same Christ risen with deliverance ; grand and majestic if you will, but fraught with such super-human sadness as to give the impression of affliction not yet wholly passed away, rather than that of the conquering Saviour on a mission of grace and favour. Not such did He appear to the eleven for the last time at Galilee. We have the Saviour in such guise as He was never beheld in after His resurrection. All admire the picture as a wonderful work of art, but the true sentiment is impaired amid excess of ornament. "Luxuriance of ornament destroys simplicity and repose, the attendants of dignity."—*Fuseli's Aphorisms*, No. 169.

Criticism cannot always be conducted as humanity points out, especially in matters of philosophy. It is the policy and habit of some of those with whom we have been dealing, to depreciate feeling, poetic culture and imagination, and to exclude them as much as possible from the lists. One of them, no obscure man, in the first number of the old series of the *Westminster*

*Review* gave out as his text, "Mr. Moore is a poet and therefore no reasoner," and this blew up the flames of a nice little war, which is we believe not yet quite ended. "On the one side, utility was denounced as cold calculation, political economy as hard-hearted, and anti-population doctrines as repulsive to the natural feelings of mankind." "We (that is the Westminster Reviewers speaking by their Coryphæus Stuart Mill) retorted by the word 'sentimentality' which along with 'declamation' and 'vague generalities,' served us as common terms of opprobrium. Although we were generally in the right as against those who were opposed to us (we religiously abstain from Italics) the effect was that the cultivation of feeling (except the feelings of public and private duty) was not much in esteem among us, and had very little place in the thoughts of most of us, myself in particular. What we principally thought of, was to alter people's opinions, to make them believe according to evidence and know what was their real interest, which when they once knew, they would, we thought, by the instrument of opinion enforce a regard to it upon one another. While fully recognizing the superior excellence of unselfish benevolence and love of justice, we did not expect the regeneration of mankind from any direct action of those sentiments, but from the educated intellect enlightening the selfish feelings."—*Stuart Mill's Autobiography*, p. III.

In another place, speaking of himself as he was when young, he says, "My zeal was as yet little else than zeal for speculative opinions. It had not its root in genuine benevolence or sympathy with mankind, though these qualities held their due place in my ethical standard.

Nor was it connected with any high enthusiasm for ideal nobleness. Yet of this feeling I was imaginatively very susceptible; but there was at that time an intermission of its natural element, poetical culture, while there was a superabundance of the discipline antagonistic to it, that of mere logic and analysis. Add to this, that my father's teachings tended to the undervaluing of feeling—he thought that feeling could take care of itself; that there was sure to be enough of it if actions were properly cared for—offended by the stress laid on feeling as the ultimate reason and justification of conduct, he (James Mill) had a real impatience of attributing praise to feeling, or of any but the most sparing reference to it."

"Of course all this led to a depreciation of poetry and of imagination generally as an element of human nature. Bentham used to say, that all poetry is misrepresentation, and if he could have said more he probably would have done so." Of himself again Stuart Mill says, "I was wholly blind to the place of poetry in human culture as a means of educating the feelings. But I was always very susceptible to some kinds of it. . . I had obtained in the natural course of my mental progress poetical culture of the most valuable kind by means of reverential admiration for the lives and characters of heroic persons, and especially of the heroes of philosophy."—*ib.* III.

Here we have the full plan and tactics of acknowledged leaders of an influential sect laid before us, not only unfalteringly, but with a perceptible self-glorying in a work for the publication of which persons now living are answerable, and which is therefore necessarily open to and challenges free comment.

The policy of James Mill in the education of his son, was something like but more successful than, that of the king in the old story, who having been warned by an oracle that his son would be killed by a lion, shut him up in a tower by way of precaution, and so as if possible to shame the oracle; the result being that the young prince died of blood-poisoning caused by a rusty nail in a picture of a lion in his room, which he had struck with his fist in a fit of spleen: James Mill being in his own case, the king, the oracle, the lion and the rusty nail all in one.

James Mill is plainly answerable for the initiative of much of what we count as mischief in the speculative principles and philosophic career of Stuart Mill; but no further, and not to the end. We are all diversely tempted, but with every temptation come always the means of escape. The wrong done by James Mill lay in his shaping the form of temptation for his son in his unprotected infancy, and forcibly, and we think we may add, insidiously, obstructing the natural inherent right of every man born into the world to correct his early impressions in a matter of this kind, in which he must stand or fall by and for himself, by his own matured judgment. The Christian parent alone is privileged in such a case, for if Revealed Religion be not true, all other forms of belief are alike unstable and indifferent; and for that we appeal to the manifold uncertainties and insufficiencies of those forms themselves. If James Mill were perfectly assured that he was right, something might be said for him; but he knew that he was embarked on a sea of doubt, and was sensible that he was toiling continually at a labouring oar without con-

sidering how it came about, that he had that labouring oar to toil at. If he had by any means brought himself to the opinion that feeling, in which he plainly included religious feeling, would "take care of itself," and was a delusion and a snare, he might have adopted it for himself, though we by no means agree that truth can be affronted with impunity, and his case would have been simply that of any one of the best among those who do not believe, but he had no right to enslave the infant mind of his more highly gifted son, by the course of training he subjected him to.

But we must be just between the father and the son in this matter. We know from his autobiography what warped the judgment of the son ; we know comparatively little or nothing of what misled the father. Every man must stand or fall by himself, nor are we in any case his judges, but we repeat that from every temptation there is always a way of escape. We have read somewhere (it was stated as a fact that really occurred) of a gifted child, a young lady studiously educated in absolutely infidel principles, being suddenly converted by her silly atheistical French governess going into a fit on seeing a ghost, and calling it a *revenant*, which of course implies a world elsewhere. Well, seeing a ghost is not such a very out of the way occurrence ; and we think we may fairly speculate as to the effect it might have had on Stuart Mill, if James Mill had seen one.

But mark the contrast. This young lady never accepted the infidel arguments and inducements with which she had been overwhelmed from the cradle, though she wanted skill to answer them in form ; nor could she give a connected reason for the conflicting

idea in her own mind ; but the idea was there always, biding its time, and the self-detected governess with her adult privileges and powers of talk, being thus for once and all disarmed, the good and acceptable time arrived. He who had been hidden from her was come, and from that moment they were never again parted.

Next, take the case of the child Stuart Mill ; he has told us, in his autobiography, that he never had any sense of religion ; but this we entirely doubt as a correct expression of his state of mind. We strongly suspect that the sense of religion was often in his mind, but resisted. The religious idea and its sentiment are inseparable in a well-balanced mind, and as he must frequently have encountered the former, so neither could he, gifted as he was, have always avoided the latter. We do not mean to say that men of coarser mould have not done so continually, but not Stuart Mill ; he was too earnest in his search after truth, and too upright and courageous to flinch from a difficulty. Whatever of worth was presented to his mind, that he would examine. Whether or not he ever arrived at any firm ultimate conclusion we do not pretend to divine, though we cannot avoid the inference that he must have been sorely tried at all times by the unhealthy erudition forced into his infant mind, and the perpetual talk of the pedantic elderlies of determined views for ever croaking around him, to which he seems to have been condemned, and which, meant by them as a curative process, has to us very much the look of preparing the splint first, and then breaking the limb to fit the splint afterwards.

An autobiographer writes single-handed and excep-

tionally against all the world. We do not desire him to tell us in what he resembles other men, but rather in what he differs from them; but whatever he sets down, it is always a pleading in defence, and never an authoritative judgment. There may be a great, in some cases a monstrous deal of disagreeable confession in it, but never without some undeclared policy or unconscious self-seeking, and a little, or perhaps not a little vanity. The colours in his moral rainbow are seldom rightly laid either in order or degree.

The best autobiography we ever heard of was comprised in three words, and was not committed to writing by the author. A certain Pope (we forget his name, but it was not Pío Nono, and will probably not be Leo XIII.) was sentenced by the College of Cardinals to be burnt for heresy. But the sentence was not valid, and could not be carried into effect without the Papal assent formally given; and accordingly a deputation of the cardinals having obtained audience, humbly besought him, with tears such as cardinals shed and supplications, to avert the scandal that would accrue to the Church from heretical opinions in high places by giving his sanction to the sentence; and thereupon the Pope, after autobiographically reviewing the whole matter and his former life, solemnly pronounced judgment against himself in the three words above referred to, "*Judico me cremari.*"

Cobwebs do not always cover good wine even in cellars of repute. Feeling is observably the prime motive of conduct, and reason the afterthought which may or may not prevail; then how can feeling "take care of itself" if no thought be taken of it until the work is done? The

position of the "educated intellect enlightening the selfish feelings" is just that of standing above or below the stream. The selfish feelings wear many disguises, but are always intrinsically the same. You may unmask and repress them, and indeed you must fail herein at your peril, but they take no enlightenment but detection. They are too plain-spoken for aught else. They know what they want, and will have it if they can. They are natural forces full-born in every individual that comes into the world, and older and too often more powerful than the lagging intellect, and, what is worse, are stronger and more aggressive after every victory.

One is a little amused by Stuart Mill's susceptibility in a mild form to some kind of poetry, which he traces to his "reverential admiration for the lives and character of heroic persons, and especially of the heroes of philosophy," the former doing all for glory, the latter disdaining it. But how about Ignatius Loyola, who was both of these? who began as a mirror of chivalry (you may see his portrait in that character in Hampton Court Palace), a hero proper of the tented field and tilts and tournaments, to whom it would have been a joy for life to run a course in the lists to the honour and glory of the Madonna, and who ended as a monk, a double-refracting Iceland spar or Proto-Jesuit, and as such a hero of philosophy, and was great and brilliant in each character, and thus plainly a man of two æons; in which would Stuart Mill have preferred him?

But in truth we do not know that philosophers in general come out very often or notably strong in the heroic line. Socrates died as he could have wished, didactic and ironical to the last. Indeed, only take the



mild and "gentlemanly" executioner (ὡς ἀστυς ὁ ἀνὴρ) for a doctor, and it was a natural death, and as quiet and painless a one as could be wished for. There is indeed a touching account of the martyrdom of a very grave and probably very wise philosopher given by Lucian in his 'Essay on Parasites.' That, if you like, may have been something like a martyrdom; but, with this exception, we do not know that philosophers in their vocation, or as a rule, have ever been, specially distinguished as heroes, except theatrically or in talk or when they could not help it.

The editors of a posthumous work are entirely answerable for its moral effect as a whole. They have a discretion to withhold it which they cannot disclaim, nor can any dying injunction authorize or justify the perpetuation of a mischief.

All agree that learning is an excellent thing; but there are learnings and learnings. There is a learning proper to chess-playing, to the whist table, to copes and chasubles, to polite conversation, to picking and stealing and the like, leading to nothing or worse. In our view, he only is learned who understands what he is about, provided only that what he is about is something sufficiently high and worth doing at all, and not, like some of our nineteenth century drolleries, beyond his natural powers to deal with. Horace, we may remember, calls the actor Roscius learned, *quæ doctus Roscius egit*, because he knew what he was about; that is to say, because he understood nature, a thing worth understanding, and could represent her faithfully on the stage; and by the same rule Horace himself was learned for calling Roscius learned. So, also, a good

quartermaster-general is learned before the battle, a good general during the battle, and a good surgeon after it ; but a good, bustling newspaper correspondent is more learned than all the three put together ; and so, lastly, by each of us may everybody else be accounted learned who can do anything worth doing that we cannot do ourselves.

But we have to do here with those who, possessing both learning and intellect in the highest degree, insist that they have neither, and never stumble because they never advance.

But it is not possible thus to stop at the threshold. Absolute freewill can exist only in the Infinite, which is without quality, and in which is neither right nor wrong as we apply those terms among ourselves. For His will is holy, and both His will and His holiness are eternal and inseparable, without beginning, change or ending. But in all finite beings the faculties and the will are equally gifts, and therefore limited and under a law, let circumstances vary as they may.

Two men shall do the same act, and it shall be good in the one and evil in the other ; not because the law of the two cases differs, but because the motive and circumstances that led to the act in each have differed ; and this difference is not casual but constant and universal, because the mind, and therefore the position, of one intelligent being is never identically the same with that of another ; and we can by no means gauge this difference. From this alone we may collect a universal moral law, proceeding from an Infinite Personal First Cause, patient with our infirmities, and exacting much only when much has been given. It is therefore above

all things incumbent on us all equally that we should apply ourselves earnestly and continually, each for himself, and not so as to judge another, to learn as nearly as we possibly can and as the ruling purpose of our lives, what is the perfect and sovereign will of this Infinite as it regards the directing of our own derivative and dependent wills. As long as we are sensible of any moral will not arising from any immediate occasion working within us, we shall find that we are also sensible of this Infinite, and cannot say that He is wholly unknown to us. If, as we certainly may do, we crush this working within us, we have neither religion nor true morality ; and wanting these we want all things.

But let us add that it is only by such a search as above indicated that we can be truly single-minded, or hope for safety or health. The generally accepted moral canons against great offences are too strongly written to be mistaken : but we do not generally begin with great offences, nor is the first approach of evil always at first seen, or if seen greatly regarded. One truth we persistently overlook, *viz.* that idle thoughts exclude good ones, the natural barriers against evil, and thus, if at any time startled into self-reflection, we become so with habits and prejudices long undisturbed, an unwilling spirit and a dulled perception of moral truth.

But the true principles of morality and conduct are not the less fixed and everlasting because we are inconsistent. The truth may be and often is, that we have been living on irreproachably enough, observing all the lesser decencies of common life without thinking much about any principles at all ; but at last some more weighty occasion arises, and we are driven suddenly and unex-

pectedly into considering how far the ten commandments will hold us harmless in something we wish and intend to do or not to do, and being perplexed, fly off to our nearest casuist to tell us whether we may do as we like or not.

But where will you or do you go to look for your casuist for this purpose? The true moral principle being fixed and perfect, can only be duly and fully explained by one, who if not himself faultless, has been instructed by one who is ; and where will you find such a guide? If we might advise, we would refer you to the first well-recommended gaol chaplain you may fall in with ; for though not faultless, he has been well and wisely taught, and from his habits and experiences will be disposed to be plain-spoken with you.

To whom else can you more hopefully resort than to this Ordinary, the most scriptural in his office of all the priesthood? He will not indeed deal with you in an argumentative spirit, for he speaks from authority to show the right way and not to argue ; for indeed those with whom he has chiefly to deal have not in general very much time left for argument. We do not indeed very much like the term *theology*, if it is to be taken to mean what it expresses, the science of God-hood. With regard to St. John the Divine, we do not accept the term *Theologus* as applying to him in that sense ; for we know that revelation such as his to us—we refer chiefly to his Gospel—will not submit to the idleness of what is called rationalism of any kind or in any degree. We are willing however if desired, to accord the title to Athanasius or Arius indifferently ; for if we agree with the former, it is not from him we learnt to do so, and

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if we dissent from the latter, why, so much the worse for him.

But you, what will you do? You have to find a lost principle which should be the law of your existence, and you have no one around you whom you can wholly trust. Be it Plato, whom you admire but cannot always implicitly follow, because he does not always go; or Cicero, who dared many of these questions, but in his own way, and somehow generally left things much as they were before; or Epictetus, or Apicius, or Mahomet, who said one or two good things in his own time and way; or Gallio, who never said anything at all; or Stuart Mill, who rejected the Scriptures, and yet sometimes wrote almost scripturally; or the "unjust steward"; or a partner in your undertaking, or be he who he may, he has his own stand-point, his own idols of the den, his own moral lights and shades and his own colours; and in fine be you confident or be you diffident, you feel that you have got nothing on which you can absolutely rely; and what is worse, in proportion as the logical faculty usurps beyond its just limits in questions not entirely its own, so does the moral light wane and become indistinct and at last vanish. And all the while there is a wolf, black of the blackest, for ever scraping at the door of the conscience.

Be it ever remembered that there is no refuge in natural Theism. We cannot worship or seek aid of an undeclared God. We have no assurance that He wills to be addressed by us, and unauthorized prayer is presumptuous, perhaps even rebellious, true prayer a privilege conferred.

Neither are we to defer too much in these matters to the authority of the man of higher culture than ourselves.

That deference is not for one finite intelligence to exact of another in a question of life or death equally affecting all. Culture has its own perils. It must be comprehensive or we shall necessarily become narrow-minded, that defect which we so readily perceive in others and never detect in ourselves. We do not mean that we are to apply our faculties to all subjects exhaustively alike ; that would be an offence against natural order and common sense, and is indeed a very frequent cause of failure in all pursuits. We need but assume here that all our faculties worthy of culture may as a general rule, by duly apportioned care and study be so forwarded and improved as to yield rich fruit in its season, without in the least obstructing us in that pursuit which choice or circumstance has made the duty of our lives. The man of one study little dreams what he loses. An intellectual pleasure not missed is not the less a pleasure thrown away. Dr. Dalton, when on a visit to Cambridge, was taken by his friends to King's College Chapel, and had the great organ played for him ; after a few minutes of profound cogitation, on being asked what he thought of it, he pronounced, "What a remarkable echo is thrown from the floor !" Now, do we not in this feel something like an emotion of pity for a very distinguished man to whom all would wish every good thing ? and is not pity in such a case exultation ? and how would you like to be pitied yourself ?

But once more for awhile to the imagination and its accomplices. We can no more trace thought back to its first form than we can matter. This is a question which, if we recollect rightly, baffled even Mephistopheles, and he knew all that the magnificent and courtly Goethe could

tell him. The imagination working as we have seen, is in our waking state in a considerable degree subject to our will and control, and should therefore be under discipline. It is otherwise in dreams, except perhaps to a limited extent in the cases of nightmare and a bad conscience, in which we seem to be able to manufacture a sort of character dreams for ourselves ; but the details are altogether beyond our management, and dreaming may be counted a kind of possession. The imagination is thus an active abiding power within us.

We would cite here one well-known instance of the blended action of several faculties of the mind to one end ; that namely of Milton's Satan, a very different person from the true one. This character of Milton's is the offspring in part of the imagination, in part of the memory, in part of the reason and judgment of the author. But feeling pervades the whole. The first conception of it was imaginative, for no such person ever existed ; the thoughts, words and actions attributed to him, being in some degree traditional, were derived in part from the memory, but were in the main inventions drawn from and constructed out of the author's own human feelings and experiences ; and thus, inasmuch as if there had been such a being he must have been the true embodiment of the "magnified man" above spoken of, they must have been such as they are described to have been ; and the greatness of the poet, both as to his invention and judgment, appears from this, that we his readers, as men though not yet magnified, are able to pronounce the character true to nature, and to have a common feeling with him, and much more indeed than we have with the magnified women or witches in 'Macbeth.'

It is a matter of history that the Lord Chancellor Thurlow preferred this Satan to the Archangel Michael, and in some slight degree acted up to the idea ; but we would rather draw from it a very different moral, viz. the continuous progress of evil in a perverted mind. There is something impressive in a grand conspirator when he first takes open ground, however much we may disapprove of his cause. We first meet with Satan after his defeat, great in council, true to the partners in his fall, heroic in daring. There was a gallant *insouciance* displayed by him at his first meeting with Sin and Death. With or without their leave he had simply determined to make his way through the gate, and he made it. The grandeur and pathos of his address to the sun is not yet forgotten by all, and it is not until we find him in Paradise, yielding himself up to envy, the meanest of passions ; then squatting as a toad to instil venom into the ear of the helpless sleeping Eve ; then exploding like the "smutty grain" into his own proper form and proportions at the first touch of the spear of Ithuriel ; then declining battle, first with the two young rank and file cherubs, and then with the archangel ; then as the lurking snake creeping secretly on to the completion of his heinous and spiteful act, and slinking shamefully away after it ; and lastly, winding all up with his boastful and malignant speech to his comrade devils on his return to Pandemonium, the fitting prelude to and apology for the half-burlesque hissing chorus that ensued ; it is not, we say, until we have traced him through all these, that we fully realize the utter baseness and badness of his character, and are able to present him in due form with the hoofs and horns which he wears to this day.



But we are now on the higher faculties of the mind, and their mutual affinities and concert in action, and we repeat that if any of them tend to effect an entirely spiritual end or purpose, they cannot be of material or physical origin.

Amongst these faculties is the memory, itself inert, and yet the most indispensable of all, for without it we could have no sense of identity from one moment to another. In itself it is little better than a store of unsorted inconsequential past ideas and impressions, and would be but of slight practical service to us without the aid of other faculties by which we are enabled to call them to mind at need. These faculties we will for our convenience, and not in the way of definition, call here collectively the power of recollection. This power, incomplete in all and of varying strength in every individual, is often assisted in action by the well-known law of association of ideas, by force of which one idea recalls another naturally unrelated, but connected by some passing accident or triviality. This phenomenon we recognize and sometimes avail ourselves of for our own purposes by divers little contrivances, as, vulgarly, by tying a knot in our handkerchiefs, or displacing a finger ring, or by betting on the point and winning, or by putting ourselves or others to some inconvenience, or educationally, as by letting a child fall into the fire that it may not do so again, or by some mental process, as by composing gibberish memorial lines, or by catachrestic witticisms, especially on high and sacred subjects, or by establishing an *a priori* principle of contradiction, because of course what we easily assent to, that we easily forget ; or lastly, by open penance, that is, by recanting on con-

viction and before witnesses, a favourite prejudice ; of which last however we never met with but one instance, and there the man was wrong in recanting.

All these are trite enough, and harmless enough if not carried to excess, though perhaps a habit of thoughtfulness and attention might in the end answer the purpose better ; as indeed appears from this, that when our design is evil, we seldom if ever resort to them, as knowing well that evil from its earnestness of purpose can always take care of itself, and that uneasiness always goes before a premeditated wrong.

But there is a further view. We know not that we ever really forget. We have all of us sleeping memories of things we would gladly lose ; the memory of them is distasteful, grievous, intolerable ; and yet these we can never ward off ; against their awakening we are never safe, no, not for an instant. Remember what the Childe, now so long ostracized by a discerning public, has told us,—

“ But ever and anon of griefs subdued  
There comes a token like a scorpion's sting,  
Scarce seen, but with fresh bitterness embued.  
And slight withal may be the things which bring  
Back on the heart the weight which it would fling  
Aside for ever ; it may be a sound,  
A tone of music—summer's eve—or spring—  
A flower—the wind—the ocean which shall wound,  
Striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound.”

*Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, canto 4, st. 23.

Did not the Childe speak sooth ? Was he not wise ?  
Despite a slightly confused metaphor, which you may  
riddle out for yourself if you like, were truer or more  
terrible or sadder words ever uttered by suffering man ?

Are not these tokens always in and about our paths? and are not the bearers of them among the very things which in our gentler moods we most court for solace and delight? The griefs subdued of the Childe are infolded in the memories of the past of which we spoke, or as he has far better expressed it—

“ The spectres whom no exorcism can bind,  
The cold, the changed—perchance the dead, anew ;  
The mourned, the loved, the lost—too many !—yet how few ! ”

*Ib.*, st. 24.

Yet there are memories worse than all these, the memories of things ill done, of which however we are by the laws of philosophical courtesy forbidden here to speak ; for victorious philosophy (and when is she not victorious?) is superior to all regrets. But thus much we will add for ourselves and other outsiders ; these “griefs subdued” of the poet and the memories of ill deeds, though passing torments, are visitations of mercy, for awakening good thoughts, for correction, for guidance and for healing ; but only under a living and gracious Providence, which alone can and will heal ; except under such a Providence they are no longer means of healing, but absolute and hopeless torments.

In this law of association we can often, we need not say always, trace no chain of consequences or direct or explicable cause and effect. The memory, an intellectual faculty, by an act not all its own, sudden, swift and inevitable, recalls ideas which rush at once to the feelings, thus appealing to the conscience and beginning at the point where the reasoning faculty has rightly or wrongly done its work and retired. At the beginning of all evil, the reason has either slumbered or by some means failed ;

nor is this very much to be wondered at, if, as has been said, the major of every syllogism is only a register of former inferences, which may or may not in all cases have been fairly arrived at.

We do not in fact estimate acts of extreme turpitude by the reason. The fixed horror and disgust with which we witness or hear of such an act, is too instantaneous for the slow conclusions of the cause and effect reason, and must come from another source, which we are not afraid to call the moral sense, and to assert that it exists apart from, though accepting the services of, the reasoning intellect and in unison with it ; that it is not in fact the reason that feels. Without such a sense there would to us be no such thing as turpitude, nothing but great blunders, and we should be each of us, so far as concerns good and evil, a breathing, arguing carcase cased in its own scaly prejudices, a fair solution of the Bolognese *Ænigma*,

“ *Hoc est sepulcrum, cadaver intus non habens ;*  
*Hoc est cadaver, sepulcrum extra non habens ;*  
*Sed cadaver idem, et sepulcrum sibi.*”

It is a grievous, soul-destroying offence to meditate on acts of turpitude.

We appeal here to common experience, whether in a sound and healthy state of mind we are not in truth sensible of a double conscience within us ? Whether the vexation we suffer from having fallen into some error of judgment in perfect innocence, and so as to be absolutely free from all imputation of moral blame, is not different in kind from the sharp and enduring remorse we feel for a moral offence ? We will suppose the consequences of

the former to have been grievous, calamitous, overwhelming to ourselves and others; those of the latter slight, trivial, hardly appreciable, and we again ask the same question? How will it be in each case with a man of firm and upright mind and principle? Such a one will doubtless feel the consequences of the former and especially to others, but not as a wrong done by himself; he will be conscious that he has done his best (for that is the supposition), and will refer both act and consequences to an overruling power, or perhaps, according to his philosophy, to the cross-grained nature of things; and we shall only admire him the more for doing so. In fact, this disposition in him is a form of courage, and a leading characteristic of all great men, of the man of action and the man of study alike, except that the man of the midnight oil is perhaps a little more subject to wandering doubts and uncertainties, themselves not wholly innocent things, than the other.

The remorse, on the other hand, of such a man for a moral offence or shortcoming worthy of remorse (we do not here regard trivialities), irrespective of all consequences, and known it may be only to himself, is fierce and lasting; he has dishonoured and sullied his own soul, and unless he has learned to say with King David, "Against Thee only I have sinned," his pain may endure for ever; for most clearly, if there be no one to be offended, there can be none to forgive, and none to heal.

So fares it with the high-minded and upright man; but how is it with the lesser man? With him the two cases supposed are both as one; with him all is consequence. He has done some act, and the consequences have been

disastrous, and he may perhaps think that it is hanging matter, and then motive, act and consequence get so mixed up in his little box of ill-accommodated brain-tissue, and he gets amazed into such a course of unstable excuses, shifts, half or quarter explanations, subterfuges, half-lies, whole lies, fears, terrors, *tu quoque's*, and unpronounceable self-sympathies of all kinds, as to make us long to repay him fully the long-standing debt of the spared rod of his childhood, and so as not to err on the side of mercy.

But good and evil as distinctive realities have not yet been established to the satisfaction of all; and it is rather hard for us to deal with an all-round privilege that admits of no instances. If you press such a one with some act of shocking turpitude by way of an example, his natural hatred of the offence is equal to your own, and he at once pronounces it evil in the extreme; and then, being thus far committed to an abhorrence or emotional condemnation of evil, hastens up with an apology, and attributes it to his natural æsthetic love of beauty and hatred of deformity in all things. It is the same if you try him with an opposed instance; tell him of some act of supereminent goodness—and he is equally moved with yourself; he repeats his apology, and the same answer will hold; and these two extremes cover the whole field of conduct and thought.

This apology might perhaps be used as at least a qualified admission of analogy between things seen and things unseen, but not full home; because these unseen are not admitted, and at this point closes all possible controversy between the two parties at issue, each of necessity having to retire and keep within his own lines.

But we may each of us set out our own wares : and we both of us cry " Come, buy without price."

On your side, it is maintained that, even conceding that the sense of beauty exists in ourselves alone, fitness and harmony, the perception of which first awakens that sense, so entirely and thoroughly overspread and pervade the whole visible universe, that it is a reasonable if not inevitable inference, that this sense of beauty is but the natural outcome or apt and necessary development and consequence of this fitness and harmony, and that as they are material forms or qualities, such also must be this sense itself.

This ambitious position has to us something the look of an inverted comma, a fine line taking a twist downwards and ending in a large round blot, used generally to denote goods not our own. You present us with a dead world, for such it must ever be to us without a living soul, imparted it may be, to many objects. You seem to us to scrimp the question fearfully. Furthermore it would be to us even worse than a dead world, if never visited by divine interposition or what you call interruptions of the course of nature.

We are conscious that we possess each of us a limited free will both in matters wholly indifferent and in those which attract grave, it may be most grievous consequences ; and it is certain that we do in these latter cases set ourselves in the exercise of that will, to oppose and disturb, not unsuccessfully, [the wise and kindly order of all things within our reach. It must be so, or there could be no such things as crimes and offences. We are not seeking to argue here, but only to set out our own wares for the approval of those who we

surmise may be discontented with what they find on your side. We infer from these opposed tendencies to order and disorder existing in different degrees in all, that there must be some one Power over and above all, that embraces and sustains all, and in a special way limits and controls our rebellious wills; and in this we are able clearly to trace a disposition in that Power not wholly to destroy us for our perverseness, but to discipline and guide that will by an inward monition which we have at all times more or less felt. But we know that this monition or ordinary manifestation of the Power within us, has not prevailed against our perverseness; and yet through a grace still abounding, we are not destroyed. Is it then so very improbable, is it not on the other hand most reasonable to expect, and quite sufficiently so to disarm all antecedent incredulity, that this long-suffering Power should intervene by extraordinary and open means and manifestations to check and remedy those moral wrongs and evils which ourselves have caused? which means and manifestations, although interruptions of the ordinary course of natural things, argue thus neither weakness nor change of purpose in that Power, but much rather a continued action of perfect and consistent goodness. But far stronger is the inward monitor that comes to all, and for the same purpose continually, but breaks no outward order.

A miracle is a sign vouchsafed by the Lord of All to the only intelligent and moral being on earth capable of reading such a sign, and who without it must, as we may justly infer, perish in his hardness and error. The grace therefore of a miracle is its true measure; to be found not in the lightnings of Sinai, but in the law then



delivered. Thus, in the going back of the shade on the dial of Ahaz, it is in our view indifferent whether we are to look upon it as effected by an actual reversal of the earth's rotation with all its amazing physical consequences, or as of the nature of an apparition, a waking vision as it were, vouchsafed to Hezekiah, then rather a central object in religious history. In either view it was the immediate act of Jehovah, and equally an act of grace and mercy to Hezekiah and those who thought with him.

But to return to the inverted comma : we may accept largely the analogy between quiet scenes of nature and quiet thoughts, but not absolutely. These quiet scenes are themselves to us gifts of grace ; they pass and are renewed continually, but not at our command, nor always with equal, or even the like influence ; the thoughts they inspire abide with us long after the scenes themselves have passed from us, perhaps for ever. A good thought in us never wholly dies ; we may repress it, we may train ourselves with Satan's aid to scorn it ; but it retains its place in the mind that has once received it, it may be for our good ; it may be, as we treat it, for our greater condemnation. The imagination, itself a gift, carries us away from these natural scenes and their first immediate impressions, to a world of peace unseen, of the truth and certainty of which, though as yet to us unclad in form, we are at the same time fully assured. As our thoughts dwell in this unseen world we are induced and enabled to assign to it all we can conceive of good and glorious in this our visible one, though perfectly conscious that what we thus assign is but a subjective, weak, limited, fanciful imagination, drawn from and constructed out of our past

experiences of what is best in this life, yet falling ever infinitely short of the full truth. But further, the more we abide in this contemplation of the unseen, the more we yearn for it, and with fuller assurance and more chastened thoughts we seek it, and, as we advance, with less sensible imagery we clothe it. And all this, we are told, is the natural step by step result of the great law of conservation of material energy, and nothing else ; and that these quiet natural scenes were not prepared for or gifts to us or for our advantage, but that we ourselves are true Autochthones, sprung from the raw material of these natural scenes, and have no other home, and are indeed integral parts of the same.

It will perhaps be said that in this our dealing with the unseen, we discredit and dishonour the reasoning faculty ; much more do they do so who bring it to inevitable discomfiture and nothingness, by urging it on subjects absolutely beyond its natural powers, by pressing it, as it were, in a race against the infinite. For ourselves, the sentiment we have been speaking of finds us, and we reason with its aid. Sceptical philosophy warring against the Infinite, has neither front to oppose, nor base on which it can retire ; nor can we think of it as much other than a sort of chameleon sitting on a withered branch, with a decided power of speech and a telescopic eye that can only take in a single point at a time, continually changing colour, and sometimes catching a fly.

We cannot even enter on the question of the infinite without beginning from the finite, which is absurd ; for the infinite is entire and without measure. The material infinities of time and space, do but touch the fringe of the

subject, and as applied do but divert us from the true infinite of the spirit.

Philology is the executive of philosophy in many a mischief. We are all much governed by words, and when we cannot very well express a thing, we do not in general very well think it; and thus it befalls that the "Pragmatic Sanctions" or *jeux de mots* of all philosophies so continually scatter at the end, like the sparks of a rocket turning to its fall, leaving a small residue clinging to and descending with the stick. Among these we cannot but name *honoris causâ* that grand commingling of *de profundis* and *il faut s'amuser*, that plausible piling up of special infinities, Spinoza's epithetical definition of God above referred to.

What among these special spectral infinities, are we to say to infinite velocity? That there may be such a thing in the material world is clear enough, for we can always add to a given velocity, without any limit; yet if there be such a thing, it must begin and end at one and the same instant, and yet by virtue of its infinitude neither begin nor end at all; and further it must perforce annihilate the servient infinities of time and space in which it has its being.

There is indeed such a velocity with which we are all familiar, that, namely, of thought; but thought is spiritual and not subject to either time or place.

What again are we to say to discordant and conflicting infinities united in one infinite energy, by virtue of which one force, infinite by courtesy, is continually yielding to and accepting qualifications from another infinite by courtesy, without which the world could not be as it is? Does not qualification detract from infinitude? Must

there not be some one greater energy behind these infinities, which must itself be more than simple energy, that is, a directing energy?

But indeed what of subjects altogether outside the ideas of finite and infinite, that know nothing of *plus* and *minus* and cannot be made to walk in processions of "serial correlative concepts" every one as like its fellow as one wink is to another? or what again of the will or causal power of an Infinite that was before all other infinities? and what of ideas seated in the mind of that Infinite, itself the sole cause of all ideas, even of those which have never yet reached any created consciousness, but which together with the forms and all the remotest consequences, possibilities and contingencies of things which have never happened, must yet be seated in that mind? You will say that this is the very question you declined to enter upon; but we hardly think that you always keep very close up to your professions in this, and partly suspect you of a denial pregnant. But do you not in effect bring the question round to this—God, if a Personality, will disclose himself to whom he will disclose himself; and to none besides; if not a Personality, he cannot disclose himself at all? The first alternative brings us at once to the question of Revelation or no Revelation; in the latter we know not what or where you are, except that you must be somewhere in the dark.

The position that the finite cannot conceive the infinite, applies absolutely to the Infinite of Infinities, which embracing all things is itself without quality; but the instant you begin to deal with quality, you may manage for a time well enough either with or without your "serial correlative concepts" fancy, which after all is but the old

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nursery quibble "to-morrow never comes" told in tall words ; although indeed this quality being but a secondary form, will not carry you very far.

The hard-ware or materialistic view of the question seems to us, so far as we can make out, to come pretty nearly to this :—"The steps in the formation of the world are demonstrably these—primitive matter—motion—inorganic matter—organisms—life—intellect—reason—reasonable morality : and all these being worked by a certain energy (it sounds rather better in Greek, *ἐνεργεια τις*) are simply co-ordinates and equals in all they take in hand together ; thus for instance, the *ipse dixit* or two-note song of the cuckoo is as much the efficient cause of Spring as the Spring is of the cuckoo ; because if there were no Spring, the bird would not sing, and so lose one of its faculties ; and if it did not sing, the Spring would be deprived of one of its attributes, and thus by the exhaustive process, both the spring and the bird must in the end come to nothing. This we think it must be allowed follows Hume's argument above stated by you too closely not to be sound ; but if it is not enough we will follow Balak's policy with Balaam, and move to another place out of truth's way.—The will is demonstrably nothing but motion, for we see the one and feel the other ; and our actions depend not upon the will but on an energy not ourselves, behind the will : and this applies alike to all things that live and move ; to a fish taking the hook, to a Napoleon marching to Moscow, to a thief honestly dividing spoils, and to St. Martin sharing his cloak with the beggar. Now, in the case of the fish the act is plainly sensuous and material, and therefore so must the act have been material in all the others. Some

indeed yielding to an old prejudice, will still have their talk about the good, bad and indifferent of the acts, as that, in the fish it is good, being within his natural right, or at least indifferent ; in Napoleon it was bad, because it lost him the game ; in the thief, in respect of the honest division it is good, but in respect of there being anything to divide very bad ; in St. Martin, in so far as it was an act of charity it was good, but in so far as, to judge from all the pictures we have seen of the incident, it was ostentatious, it was bad, and thus upon the whole neither quite good, quite bad nor quite indifferent. But we have shown that this is only an old and wearing out prejudice, and are getting a little tired of saying the same thing over and over again, but will very gladly do so to oblige."

We think we can propose a mild compromise in this matter. We will take it that when a wrongful act is done blame attaches somewhere, though not necessarily to him who actually does it.

The good old Captain Coram one day saw a deserted infant crying itself to death in a gutter, and straightway at his own costs and charges went and established the Foundling Hospital. Now that was a mischievous and blamable act, for a foundling hospital is now recognized by all as a public nuisance, and the good Captain's "dead hand" has in fact since then with the approval of all been made to point in a different direction, and his Institution is now converted into one for the maintenance and education of orphans or the children of widows ; "against this there is no law."

Then to whom the first blame ? not surely to the good Captain, the old storm-beaten East India mariner,

who knew nothing and was not bound to have known anything of public policy and economies. He saw nothing but the deserted child perishing, and dreamt not of the encouragement he was giving to unnatural parents all over the land. He may for aught we know have seen Rousseau's historical babies hanging from time to time at the grating of the *Maison des Enfants Trouvés* in Paris, and known or suspected nothing of the highly gifted prig, the preposterous infidel Tartuffe of a father, scribbling phrases and plotting and chuckling with his dirty scolding drab in a garret. Then to whom the blame? we may add here parenthetically, that if the Captain was quite right, Rousseau was not quite wrong; but to whom the blame? We should be inclined to say to the diluted intelligence of the age generally, or, (running with the stream in such questions) to the short-coming of the clergy, or the not-coming at all of the undenominational schoolmaster, or to the loud vanities of charity dinners, but blame somewhere there certainly was, and in proportion as we praise the Captain for his good intention, so must we denounce society for its perverseness in not speaking the right word at the proper time.

Or take again the sensational Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the last great sweep of the Huguenot persecution, against which rhetorically so much has been said but for which politically and casuistically something may yet be urged; as perhaps thus:—If the expelled citizens were bad and dangerous citizens, if they were always plotting against Church and State, and if the King were not only *jure divino* Church and State, but *de facto* a good and pious Church and State; and if the ministers

of state were wise and patriotic ministers, and the confessors and other court ecclesiastics spiritually minded and non-pluralist confessors and ecclesiastics, the thing would not have been so bad after all ; for spider-brushing is only rough extradition, and properly localized is always allowable : and again, even assuming the expelled citizens to have been good and peaceful citizens, and the King, ministers and ecclesiastics to have been badness all round, it is always permissible and sound and wise policy in sufficiently great undertakings to look mainly and in the first place to results, and as friends of progress and upon every principle of moral utility, it was expedient, fit and proper for the hidden directors of affairs to accept and forward the Revocation, though perhaps a little high handed, as a beneficial act of a philosophical providence ; because by aggravating the existing wrong it accelerated the coming right, and by the simple act of removing the well disposed, made it the easier to convert the ill-disposed into instruments for the regeneration of society. The Revolution was then in full advance. The plunders and privileges of the old monarchy, and luxuries, cruelties and blind *insouciance* of the *noblesse* loosened the tongues of the Voltaires, the Rousseaus and Diderots, and the *hautes dames* of the *Salons* to prepare the way for the true men of the Revolution so soon to follow. One must not be over nice in a great cause, or too hard on what have been called by some the excesses of the Reign of Terror. They were but experiments in vivisection : and besides, if Mirabeau had lived he would have had his own way, and there would have been no such Reign at all.

Mirabeau was no nightingale : like Achilles at the



trenches \* he had only to shout "*Silence aux trente voix*" and silent the thirty voices were, and silent they would have been had they been many times that number.

Plato though a dissenter was never a popular preacher. He had no beatitudes for the millions. He spoke only to men devoted to his own shining abstractions, and not, as Emerson expresses it, to rats and mice like ourselves. We doubt if he would have wept at the grave of a hundred Lazaruses, unless they had happened to have been philosophical, sisterless celebrities.

Socrates by-the-bye, pleaded, not we think very heroically or very consistently, occasional conformity to the indictment against him for setting up new gods ; that is to say, that he did in fact duly sacrifice to the old ones at all proper times and seasons, and therefore could not be justly charged as their subverter. Henry IV. (*Pervert*) and Sully (*Huguenot*) were one day being driven through the streets of Paris in the same coach, when at a sudden lurch and under some apprehension of danger, the king crossed himself. "Sire," quoth Sully, "I never knew before that you were a Catholic." What then will you cry, "*Vive Socrate*" the occasional, or "*Vive Henri Quart*" the consistent conformist ?

- \* " Alone he stood, and from the trench raised high  
The shout of vengeance ; which appalling cry  
They the flushed victors shuddered when they heard,  
And nerveless drooped, as back their wild steeds reared  
Ungoverned on their cars, or swerved in flight ;  
And all was rout and measureless affright.  
Thrice from the trenches came that sound of dread,  
And feebly rallied, thrice the Trojans fled ;  
Or in the throng fell helpless to the plain,  
By their own steeds and clashing chariots slain."

*Iliad*, b. 18.

We should not be too ready to extol heathen morality for what we find good in it in its own right or for its own sake, until we know where it came from. A good word spoken in season sinks silently into the heart of the hearer and may be seemingly forgotten, but yet bear fruit in due time. We do not always know where our convictions come from, nor if we do are we always very much inclined to disclose it.

I remember very long ago having an argument with a lay friend on some point of theology ; each converted the other, but neither of us confessed it ; and so we parted, and the whole thing was seemingly forgotten. Many years afterwards we fell by chance on the same question, when, to my great amazement, my own discarded pet argument and in my own rather exceptionable Doric, was hurled violently at my head by my opponent, as we sat together, renegado against renegado, each more excited than ever ; and further, though I forget what it was about, I felt far more strongly convinced then, that my original argument was wrong, than I ever was that it was right.

Whether St. Paul and Seneca ever met face to face is we believe a question. Some have gone so far as to say that the latter was secretly a Christian. St. Jerome was moved on one occasion to call him *pæne noster*. For our own part we would rather not have it so. We do not know what *pæne noster* so applied means. It has to us an air of compromise ; we get thinking of Naaman the Syrian after his miraculous cure, "There is no God in all the earth but in Israel. The Lord pardon thy servant only in this thing, that when I bow down before the image of that vile emperor of mine," &c. &c.

St. Paul taught faith as an entire doctrine, the one

thing needful ; to him there was no morality but the acceptance and the living worthily of that faith. He, so fearful lest he should himself haply become a castaway, was a most jealous teacher, and regardless of times and occasions, would have allowed neither cavil nor excuse, and, as he once told St. Peter, would never have tolerated a half-convert, and still less any time-serving in high positions. How can one for an instant conceive him discussing commonplaces in morality with such a one as Seneca ? The latter may be dispersedly moral and might pass for a very broad easy-going Christian here and there in some of his writings, but like our own Cardinal Wolsey, he kept a ledger and inventories and was a watcher of times and seasons, and of any approach to the saving faith required by St. Paul there is not a trace.

But this living worthily of the faith is a morality springing from faith itself, and it came into the world with Christ, and it is admitted by all, with the exception of a few moral experts with theories of their own, to be perfect ; and antagonistic as it was to all other systems, could not have lain long under the bushel or have remained long hidden. St. Paul, the apostle chosen for the very purpose, was teaching unmolested at Rome for years, and was not unknown to divers of the household of Cæsar, nor could his converts have been slow to speak or unpersuasive in utterance and in example of life. The beginning of the conversion of the whole world could not have long remained a secret, nor its distinctive character the secret of a tribe or sect.

We may infer from the contrasting force of its first teaching as compared with all that had ever gone before, and the natural ascendancy of good over evil, that much

of the distinctive Christian morality must through the precepts and observed conduct of the first followers of Christ, have reached, been accepted and spread abroad by and among many who may have rejected, or possibly may never have heard of, or in the least examined the special religious doctrine. In Pliny's letter to Trajan there is very striking mention of the morality of the Bithynian Christians, but not a word of their doctrine. The statement of their "*adorantes Christum tanquam deum*" was nothing. It was easy and allowable in those days to set up a new god, provided he did not interfere too much with the old ones. Virgil, we may remember, for value received made Augustus Cæsar a god (*Eclogue* 1), and in fact the Western Pantheon was as open to all as the Hall of Eblis. Throughout the earlier persecutions, the test, if there was no question of confiscation, seems to have been in general simple enough, "Kneel to the statue of Jupiter or Cæsar, or to Gessler's hat, as the case might be, and pass on."

The various scattered persecutions of the first Christians of which we read seem to have generally displayed much of the natural character of the time and place of their occurrence. In Paul, considered as a persecutor, it was a movement for Church and State, which he then took to be in some peril, and little more is recorded against him than a rather general haling to prison in the name of the law, which of course *nemini facit injuriam* (*Blackstone's Commentaries, passim*). In Ephesus, persecution was only a silversmiths' trade riot; in the cities of Greece, an occasional *émeute* in the Ghettos, that is, among the Jews; for the Ghetto was, we rather think, a Christian institution; in Alexandria, philosophical and

literary, until sects came and then it was all of the above at once. In Rome only was it popular for its own sake, and for the maintenance of the sports of the arena, and in this guise it spread through the provinces.

But these persecutions were in a politic view, where there was no tax-gathering or confiscation in the case, only the action of a rough police. There was no such thing as loyalty, and it was therefore desirable and necessary that the chief of the state should be worshipped as a god, that he might be obeyed as an emperor, and thus, he was accounted disaffected who would not evince his willing submission by an overt act of worship. The people themselves were so embruted with the shows and public murders of the arena that they had learned to care for little else. It was a pleasure to those who were themselves slaves, to have slaves of their own; and such the gladiators were, for surely he is your slave whom you can kill or let live at your own will and pleasure, *pollice verso* by a turn of your thumb.

These slaves, these "mean whites" of Rome, carried this *pollice verso* principle not a little into private life. The right divine of caricature and abuse, and that hoarse, heavy laughter which explodes sometimes before and sometimes after the arrival of some vile indecency, through the mere hope and delight that something bad is coming or has come at last, was sufficing liberty for them. With these for their privilege they were always ready for a riot. Bishop Wordsworth of Lincoln, has inferred from the metrical form of *Christianos ad leones*, a common cry at the time we are speaking of, that it may have been not improbably the burden or a part of some doggrel song then current.

We may reasonably infer, that when a party or sect have arrived at the distinction of being extensively lampooned, they must be objects of some kind of interest to the authors and to the public, the encouragers of such abuse. We will only refer to two instances out of many of these. Martial, a man of letters, having a quarrel with a Jew whom he suspected of perjury, required him to clear himself by swearing, not by the gods of Rome, which he had probably already done profusely enough, but by Anchialus, whom Martial supposed to have been the god of the Jews.

But there never was any such a being as Anchialus. The word is plainly a corruption of the Hebrew *Am chi Elohim*, "As the Lord liveth," a common form of oath among the Jews, who were probably great swearers, and which must thus have been familiar both to Martial and his readers, though they knew not the meaning of it. This applies to the more educated classes of Rome.

The other instance refers to the Christians. Among the *graffiti* or wall scratchings of Rome, one has come down to us, a very blasphemous one, representing a man in an attitude of worship at the foot of a cross, on which is suspended a human figure with the head of an ass, and beneath it an inscription, *Αλεξαμενος σεβετε θεον*, the bad grammar alone sufficiently indicating from what class of the community it came, and for whom it was intended.

Instances may be multiplied indefinitely. There is hardly one of the satirists, the satire being a form of composition then peculiar to Roman literature, but has his fling at the Jews, and it is abundantly clear that the Jews first and especially, and afterwards the Christians, were very numerous at Rome; and we well know how

the latter under Nero came to be deemed worthy of the Imperial attentions, and what came of it. In this way we learn that the habits, manners and customs of the Jews, all peculiar, were well known to the Roman people, and that for those habits, manners and customs they were generally deemed obnoxious.

But amongst these Jews must have been some of the better classes. Several of the Asmonean princes were at different times resident in Rome, inmates of the Imperial circle, though we would not count very much of them. But there must have been among the Jewish residents at Rome, men of high intellect and cultivation, and you cannot make such men contemptible by ill-treating and despising their less favoured countrymen ; and if you cannot do that you must, whether consciously or not, be more or less influenced by them. We have noticed elsewhere, following Bishop Lowth, the oriental colour of Virgil's Pollio, and its probable derivation from the then current Jewish expectation of a child about to be born (the Messiah) who was to regenerate all things. But many have observed upon, and all may recognize the occasional distinctive and exclusively Christian sentiments in didactic writers after Christ. They are for the most part familiar enough, and it would be trite and tedious to quote them ; and we will only take one, not perhaps of the strongest of them, but chiefly for the opportunity of taking a little rest by saying for once an ill-natured word or two upon the translation which we append.

“ Magne pater Divûm, sævos punire tyrannos  
Haud aliâ ratione velis, cum dira libido  
Moverit ingenium, ferventi tincta veneno,  
Virtutem videant, intabescantque relictâ.”

*Persius, Sat.*

“ Great father of the gods, when for our crimes,  
 Thou send'st some heavy judgment on the times,  
 Some tyrant king, the terror of his age,  
 The type and true vicegerent of thy rage,  
 Thus punish him ; set virtue in his sight,  
 With all her charms adorned, with all her graces bright,  
 But set her distant, make him pale to see,  
 His gains outweighed by lost felicity.”

*Dryden's Translation.*

The force of the original lies wholly in the last line, almost in the last word *relictâ*, implying something precious that has or might have been the tyrant's, but was then irrecoverably lost by his own self-indulgence and crimes. What precedes is merely introductory, stating the subject. The idea and assertion of a supreme ruling divine power, able and purposed to punish guilt, and that may be addressed in prayer, and with this the beauty and desirableness of goodness for its own sake, and the contrasting hideousness of vice, are not very far from Gospel truths. But Persius never aimed, and, with his surroundings, was unable to go beyond this, the ancient Nemesis. He has presented to us the fell tyrant, the true *μῖσος*, the thing hated of gods and men, his direful passion and sweltering venom, and his final loss and misery, in fewer words than his translator has employed lines for the purpose, and this in a way appealing direct both to the feeling and the reason, needing no exegesis, resenting all paraphrase.

Dryden on the other hand has done everything in the power of verse and metre to weaken all this and disguise his original. Selden has told us in his Table Talk, that a good translation is the comment of an able man ; but here we have the able man and the comment, and yet a bad translation. Dryden lived in Gospel light, and it



cannot but be observed how he has throughout interposed reflections of that light which, fine and grand as they may be, are yet not Persius, which was the thing we wanted. In Dryden the tyrant was an instrument, and as some One once told Pilate, could do nothing but what he was permitted to do, and the mention of our crimes as calling for some heavy judgment, is thus almost of the nature of an ill-timed apology for the tyrant viewed as an instrument of Providence. In fine, the only good part of the translation, and that inferior to the original, is this "set virtue in his sight, but set her distant"; the mention of her charms and graces is mere millinery, and the last line of all about the tamest ever written, hardly excepting the first line of Dr. Johnson's 'Vanity of Human Wishes,' the second of Burns' 'Cotter's Saturday Night,' and the third of Virgil's 'Pollio,' to which the curious may refer if they think fit.

But after all, how far better is Milton than both of them ten times told together :

" So spake the cherub, and his grave rebuke,  
Severe in youthful beauty, added grace  
Invincible. Abashed the devil stood,  
And felt how awful goodness is, and saw  
Virtue in her own shape how lovely ! saw and pin'd  
His loss."

*Paradise Lost.*

As neither Persius nor Dryden is read in these days, we look to be partially excused, by some, for the digression.

It would be needless here to enforce our position by instances, and we leave it to others each for himself to say whether there are or not among writings of the earliest Christian times, passages continually to be met

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with in heathen writings so strongly savouring of Christian morality, and in such entire contrast with the manners and licence of the times, as to preclude all reasonable probability of their having come from any other source.

This Christian morality came to us entire and at once: and it was declared by One who spoke as having authority, and not argumentatively. Every injunction of the Sermon on the Mount is a law. May we not fairly ask, to what nation of the earth, at what period of history, the Beatitudes in their perfect form, were ever so declared as they are in that discourse, and by whom? Their supreme excellence is generally admitted, or if denied, only faintly and with faltering lips; and they pronounce a ban upon all worldly inducements; and yet, unless they were declared by One himself infallible, and who could absolutely assure the promised reward, these same Beatitudes would remain with some debatable uncertainties, and we might still be able to maintain, agnostically, that a cup of clear water is not a cup of clear water, because taken from a stream itself clear, but whose spring we cannot see, and from that infer that a cup of foul water would answer our present purposes as well.

But there is another way of putting the question, which seems to have the effect of the bite of a tarantula, in making everybody dance *bon gré* or *mal gré*, but happily for the time only, and that way is the materialistic one, which we all know runs either in this way or not at all.

"The first cause is not spirit, because motion comes before it in the list, that is to say, motion becomes spirit further on by friction, and proceeding through the several stages of matter, organism, life, intellect, becomes at last

spirit ; and all of these being equally effects of straight-going and necessary causes, cannot nor can any or either more than the other or others of them, ever be morally answerable for any act whatever, the plea of duress or necessity being equally available for all ; and thus morality can always "

" Shrink to a second cause and be no more."

*Dunciad, passim.*

But you should have an instance ;—"The fall of a trigger by friction or motion brought to a point, heats the powder, which by exploding drives out the bullet, which hits a man who dies : what killed that man ? We should probably be at first disposed to answer, the man who pulled the trigger ; but that will not do, because that man was impelled so to do, by a will acted upon and assisted by material second causes beyond his control : and then where did that will come from ? and where did he get the trigger to pull ? The only true and entirely consistent answer is this : either the primary necessity or motion of all things was the sole cause of the killing ; or if not, the trigger, the powder, the shot, the will of the man, and everything else moving to the death, including the shot man for coming in the way, were all guilty, if there be such a thing as guilt in an equal degree."

We are not fully conscious of a moral will until we resist it. We cannot offend until we break, or begin to be moved to break a known law. But that is no law which cannot by some means be enforced. Physical laws can speak and act well enough for themselves, or we should not have the ape using the cat's paw to get at his own chestnuts. But the moral law, to the full as binding

as any physical one, begins indeed by suggestion and persuasion, but can only enforce itself by foreshadowed consequences, by the peace and privileges that follow direct on obedience, and the fear and remorse that it reserves for the perverse and rebellious. But then comes this difficulty ; that what each man gains of this peace and these privileges he gains for himself, and they rest hidden within his own experience, and he can never by any means worthily express them to another ; and thus every man he meets is to him an Agnostic. He may indeed argue the matter, but argument is little better at any time than the defeat of one disputant to the honour and glory of another, and has much less to do with persuasion than is generally thought.

We have noticed elsewhere the unerring sagacity of the caterpillar and the butterfly in the matter of cocoon-spinning and egg-laying. Now, if we were in their place we should have to do the same thing in each case, and we should do it ; but with this difference, that we should seek to do it in the most approved way of cause and effect for the time being, and we should do it wrong ; we should make mistakes continually. But the caterpillar and the butterfly having no reason, or none to speak of, make no appreciable errors, and they and their ancestors have done the same things, so far at least as we can see, from the beginning of time. Then what is it that thus unerringly directs them ? You will say energy ; and we would agree if we knew what directed that energy, and why it is that that energy does all things well until it develops reason, and why it is that reason is such a disturbing element in all things.

With all our boasted reason we are never equal to the

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occasion sudden. We remember many years ago, at the morning guard mount in one of our chief garrison towns, the commanding officer at the conclusion, the troops being all drawn out in line, instead of ordering them off the ground in the usual way, thought fit to pronounce the mysterious word of command, "To the right and left to your respective guards, Quick March"—and the whole line was at once hopelessly clubbed! We never saw the soldier's *dulce et decorum* in such a plight; not a man among them seemed to know where his guard was, or what it was to have a guard, or how he was to get to it. There was nothing left them but to fall back conscience-stricken to the contemptuous "As you were" of their chief. Now, if these gallant fellows could have had but the instinct of caterpillars, all would have gone well.

What is required is a spotless spiritual morality, equal to all occasions, moving to a perfect end, ever reaching towards an infinite unseen. We would not have Æsop reversed; we would not have the nobler bird stealing and decking itself in the feathers of the daw. We cannot have a morality of rags and tatters letting in iniquities at every slit, nor do we care for a morality that is always in heroics, and rarely condescends, and then only as though it scorned itself for so doing, to things of small account. Take Coriolanus as he stood immediately after the victory of Corioli:—

“ *Cor.* I sometime lay here in Corioli,  
At a poor man's house; he used me kindly;  
He cried to me; I saw him prisoner;  
I request you  
To give my poor host freedom.

*Lartius.* Marcius his name?

*Cor.* By Jupiter, forgot !

I am weary, yea, my memory is tired—  
Have we no wine here ?”

*Coriolanus*, act i. sc. 9.

and so farewell with a jest to his poor kind host's freedom ! and so much for high heroics !

“ O, we poor orphans of nothing—alone on that lonely shore—  
Born of the brainless nature, who knew not that which she bore.”

*Tennyson, Despair.*

The horror of absolute loneliness, the thought of being for ever alone friendless and forgotten of all in the vast universal void, at the mercy of blind insensible forces, is one to the natural man, and we know of no other, too grievous to be borne ; more fearful even than that of an offended God ; for if there be a God who may be offended, there is always to our present apprehensions (and the present is always with us and with the present in this life is always hope) a God who may be appeased ; and without an assurance of such a God, where is an equivalent to be looked for, and what must be our thoughts for ever ?

Some indeed have sought to oppose to this the grand philosophic calm, the exclusive privilege as we presume of Stuart Mill's more highly gifted “heroes of philosophy.” But it is certain that we did not make, and do not certainly know that we can unmake ourselves, or by our own strength or act acquire the faculties and powers of mind and spirit which lead to and enable us to maintain this calm, though possibly not being dead gifts, we may under the conditions of the gift of ourselves do a little towards it. In the philosophical view of the matter there must, we suspect, be a good deal of nature

to be got rid of before we can reach this calm. Our faculties, and consequently our thoughts, are not quite so much under our own command as we may think ; else should we be always at peace. That which gave, may take. What if the same force unknown that provided us with these high powers, which alone enable us to attain and preserve this calm, should in some creative caprice withdraw or lessen them, thus reducing us to the level of the abjects around us, whom from our present philosophical height we so nobly contemn ?

Be not over-sandalized at the expression "creative caprice"; the thing happens every day before our very eyes, when the mighty are suddenly thrown from their seats ; not in any glorious strife, nor by any expected or accountable catastrophe, but by some slight unseen touch on the brain that thenceforth foregoes its true office, or by some such every-day accident of fever as made the great Cæsar whimper like a child to Titinius for some drink, or by the slow inevitable waning of the faculties at the approach of old age, the terror of the many, the repose of the few. What is needed is not a painless unidea'd calm, a long slow swoon ; but a perfect peace full of assured hope, reaching beyond ourselves. If you tell me of the calm end of some good and great philosopher of your school, I will show you the equally calm end of some gross and vulgar evildoer ; but I will tell you further that his end is calm, because his faculties are already so far dead that he can feel no more ; and one of these instances is just as good and just as deceptive as the other. The death of the true and accepted Christian is something far different.

What if the pains and penalties of merely living make slow but sure wreck of all our faculties ? What if our

state by any means become that of the aged and heart-broken Ægeus watching from the height of Sunium, from day to day, from season to season, for the return of his son Theseus, the sole stay and joy of his life, from his perilous voyage to Crete, hoping against hope continually lessening, and at last utterly worn out, and deceived by false signals, flinging himself in despair from the precipice into the sea thenceforth to bear his name ; when he had arrived at last at that helpless state of suffering,

“ When nature gave her signs ; the eye that late  
Beamed like a star on all the lesser world,  
Now dim with heavy tears looked dully round,  
Or from beneath its pent of snowy white  
Glared wild and sudden, like the fiery glance  
Of some fell monster from its wintry den.  
All state declined, all order lost, he now  
Reeled like a drunken man, or feebly crouched,  
Muttering inaudibly with vacant stare,  
Some idle tale outrunning still his thoughts,  
Repeated oft, and all beside himself ;  
Or he would turn and frame him auguries,  
From flight of birds or falling leaves, and take  
Gladness or sorrow from the natural stir  
Of careless life, or else forgetting all,  
Set him to watch with child-like eagerness  
The worthless chances of some tangled waif,  
Helplessly driven by the eddying surge ;  
Which he would freight with some poor phantasy  
Of his sick brain, which being but the shade  
Of his past sorrow long indulged, he thus  
Would mark, and yearning by degrees, and now  
Fairly distracted, take the puny drift  
For something, undefined but near his heart ;  
And at its wreck, the ready tears would start  
Slow and unnoticed ; but through that slight breach,  
Anon the bitter tide of his true sorrow  
Would pour a wintry deluge on his soul,  
And he would bend, and veil him in his robe,  
And weep apart, long, fast, and silently.”



If our primitive ideas are only images or reflections of things received through the senses, the laws and conditions which fasten on and govern them on their arrival in the mind are subjective laws and conditions of the mind ; and being plainly not bounded by sensuous limits, must possess elements that are not sensuous ; and we have already shown what we would deduce from this.

The word "æsthetic" has become ridiculous of late from the abuse of it ; but it is good in itself. The beauties of nature, which to us are ideas presented through the senses, do of themselves, if contemplated with a quiet mind afford us the highest delight, and assuredly not a barren one beginning and ending in themselves, but one awakening those higher thoughts and imaginings of the unseen of which with their effects, we have spoken above.

But the love of nature may exceed, and so become nature-worship, and from that by no slow degrees idolatry, and thus within the prohibition of the second commandment ; for there can assuredly be no substantial distinction between a graven image a work of art, and a natural object or objects unlawfully worshipped. It might indeed be better for us to read the four first commandments as a declaration, "Thus far ye shall know me ; further ye shall not, until it shall please me to declare it." There might thus be something divine in Agnosticism after all.

Idolatry has a history of its own. He who constructed the first idol, who made the first graven image to bow down to and worship, must have had some idea, however corrupt, of the unseen whose likeness or emblem he was

essaying to produce, some thought and intention towards him, the object such as it was, of his worship such as it was.

Men in the pre-philosophic ages, having once acquired the idea of an unseen Creator and Ruler of all things, could never again entirely lose it. With this idea of invisible power came naturally that of the necessity and duty of submission and worship, and thus, acting according to their first unaided conceptions, they might ask though there was none to answer ; and they did in fact seek continually and did not find. Yet he was nevertheless known by his works, and as he was too great and distant to be conveniently personified, men turned their attention and came by degrees to address their devotions to the secondary powers of nature, which being nearer and more familiar they might anthropomorphize with greater ease ; and thence by an easy transition, to the great kings and leaders of their own race and kind, except Moses the greatest of them all, who always was and to many reasonable minds still is an object of derision.

These divine or deified men bade fair at one time to drive out the Olympians altogether. It may be remembered that Lucan in the opening of his magnanimous epic, humbly beseeches the Emperor Nero graciously to select on his Apotheosis the middle part of the heavens for his eternal throne, so as not by his greatness and majesty to throw the whole out of balance ;

“ Ætheris immensi partem si presseris unam,  
Sentiet axis onus ; librati pondera cœli  
Orbe tene medio—”

*Pharsalia*, l. I, v. 56.

This sort of deification lasted in this country full home to the days of Southey the Laureate, who alone by the weight of his genius (which certainly exceeded that of Pye, his predecessor in the office) procured the abolition of the Royal Birthday odes.

But all these personified powers of nature were only humanities in disguise, stuck round like knights of the garter with emblems by way of scrolls, to show what they were meant for, and took their form and character as idols from, and were wholly dependent for all things on, the disposition and culture of the different peoples among which they were found ; and such as the people were, such were they. Thus the idols of Greece were beautiful, because the Greeks had an eye for beauty, not a little promoted by the continual view of the perfection of the human form in the exercises of the palæstra ; but these idols were none the less, like themselves, false, cruel and licentious, and the real Olympian Jove if he had been a living person, must in his every-day cloak and doublet have fallen far short in grace and dignity of his great Phidian counterpart in Athens. Advancing westward, these same gods with some admixture of the Enchorials whom they encountered on their arrival, and of whom we may read something in Macrobius and other writers, became harder to the view, because the Romans had no fine arts but what they took by force of arms from the Greeks, and were even yet more cruel. Notwithstanding their hypercritical pretensions in matters of jurisprudence, no people that ever existed were more thoroughly unjust, cruel and barbarous towards the weak and helpless than were the Romans. The few privileges they accorded to their lower orders were but politic devices ; the pauper's

dole to keep them just alive, and up to their work, and the games of the Circus to keep them quiet ; while as for the slaves, no inconsiderable part in number of the whole people, the field-work, the *ergastulum*, the scourge, the cross, the fish-pond, and, worse than all, the intolerable fool of a master in his folly, and always in his folly,\* make up surely a sufficient cup of trembling. They were denied the very capacity of virtue. *Bonus et frugi* was the best character ever given with a good slave, the sum of all the praise he could ever hope for, that is, just one word for himself, and two for his master.

We have all heard of Nero's human flambeaus, that is, of living men and women smeared with pitch, and staked up and set fire to, in order to give light and zest to the shows of the amphitheatre. It was for such shows as these, that the more æsthetic processions, games and choruses of the Greeks were exchanged, the changes varying continually with the character for the time of the conquerors, but always tending to the worse. The rule

\* Ως ἀργαλέον πραγμ' ἐστὶν ὦ Ζεῦ καὶ πάντες θεοὶ  
Δούλον γενεσθαι παραφρονούντι δεσποτῶ.

*Aristophanes, Plutus.*

"Jamdudum ausculto, et cupiens tibi dicere servus  
Pauca reformido."—*Horace, Sat., L. i. S. 7.*

Bearing in mind that Horace the master was a poet, what lifelong, fearful suffering is implied in that single word *jamdudum* ! Nor was the literary man's debtor much better off, who, if he did not pay to the day, had to listen to his creditor reading his compositions without break or limit ;—

"Amaras

. . . Porrecto jugulo historias captivus ut audit."

*Horace, Sat., L. i. S. 3, l. 8.*

Lady Hester Stanhope was a great talker, when the fit took her. She once talked a poor relation off his seat into a dead swoon ; this was after a whole day and night of it.

was general. Moloch and Dagon were bloodthirsty and filthy, because such were their worshippers themselves ; the Druids simply cruel, owing partly to the coldness of the climate tending naturally to stupidity and ferocity, and partly to the Mistletoe, which as a vegetable comet portending general destruction, could only be eased off by continual human sacrifices.

In the extreme east too, we have heard something of the amenities of Juggernaut, and of the sacred and rebellious Ganges, which Lucan tells us is the only river in the world that runs out to the sea in a course directly opposed to the rising sun,

“ Ganges qui solus in orbe  
Ostia nascente contraria solvere Phœbo  
Audet, et adversum fluctus attollit in Eurum.”  
*Pharsalia*, l. 3, v. 280.

and also of one or two other things which we may have to refer to presently, as well as, for another purpose, to a point in Egyptian mythology, and to the Great Spirit of the American Indians.

But all these were but the devices of man bad in himself to amuse himself after his own fashion, and were not even guesses at truth. They could not last. By man idols were created, and by man they must be uncreated. Men began to think, and the places of these idols knew them no more ; as powers, for all reasoning purposes they ceased to be.

But as all men came at last to recognise a first cause of all things, they must have replaced these dethroned idols either with an eternal living Personality, the creator and ruler of all things, or with an equally powerful impersonal

necessity, having none of its own, but creating and disposing of all life.

But then comes the important question, whether among the old and palpable superstitions which have thus come down to us, there are not to be found vestiges of yet earlier and deeper truths, having no affinity to any human imaginings, resting on no conclusions of the reason, and receiving no light therefrom, the origin and sources of which are now to us more or less unknown.

If then there are such vestiges as we have been speaking of, they must have been relics of a vanished truth ; and they who adopted or preserved them must have heard a rumour of that truth ; and in proportion to the advancing intelligence and culture of each people, might the true lines of this lost truth be expected to reappear.

The subject we are now upon being no longer discarded errors but the recovery of hidden truths, should from its deep import be approached in a reverent spirit and with a single and honest aim, not for victory but for truth. The instant you fail in this, you depart from the true question, the subject slips from you not again to return undamaged. From that point you no longer reason but dispute ; and as the rules of logic are not all reasonable, you can but darken counsel ; and drift and make danger signals as you may, you will never reach port.

On the fall of these grosser and in their way æsthetic idolatries, and with the advance of civilization and better habit of thought came, or as we think, revived in the heart and mind the idea of God together with what we would venture to call the natural attributes of God ; as that he was the creator and governor of all things, therefore Almighty ; unseen, therefore a spirit. A strong

position perhaps for these times, and therefore subject to all philosophical objections of later date, and especially to the dominant one of all, and yet one not coming from the extreme party on the opposite side, viz. that being thus almighty and governing all things by his will, he neither has nor can have any power or means of declaring himself to those who are most bound to obey, and yet are the only known creatures who do or can oppose his will.

But among these divine attributes what more immediately concerned man, and must have most strongly enforced his attention, was that of justice, which as between the creator and the created comprised also that of mercy. There was an absolute writhing necessity and call for this so tempered justice, and to that end it was indispensable that God should be just in spirit, will and purpose, and that he should be an infinite ever present and pervading spirit, in order to possess and effect it at all times.

So far however this may be treated as an inference only, flowing from the idea of an Almighty, and the contemplation of the many signs of goodness active and consistent displayed throughout his creation.

But with all this, justice was not to be found, nor even reasonably to be hoped for on earth ; it might be in a future and better state of being ; and there was a general floating idea of such a state, but no full assurance of it. All material phenomena were against it. To those who had personified and deified the powers of nature, there was nothing upon which they could surely found such an expectation. The dead lay stark and motionless before them, and life was visibly fled ; and among all

their discordant gods there was neither speech nor language, nor were voices heard among them ; nor could it have ever been otherwise, themselves being but the offspring and playthings of change and decay.

Yet the idea was there, amounting in some almost to a fixed persuasion. Then whence came it ? We have ventured above to call it a rumour, that is to say, a tradition of which the original source was lost, but which stood firm and unremoved in its own intrinsic strength and propriety, not to one only but to all our highest instincts. The natural thirst that brings us to the well or running stream, is not stronger than this higher one which draws us to this spring of life. The emblems scattered through our Christian cemeteries hardly speak more strongly for it than do the various myths of Paganism. We have all heard of the "boat of the dead" of the ancient Egyptians, of the trial, judgment and sentence. Representations of these may be seen abundantly in the British Museum. We feel tempted here to give an account of them as quaintly rendered by the old traveller George Sandys: "This done (that is the embalming) they laid the corps in a Boate to be wafted over Acherasia, a lake on the south of the citie, by one only whom they called *Charon*, which gave to *Orpheus* the invention of his infernall ferri-man ; an ill-favoured slovenly fellow, as should seem by *Virgil*. About this lake stood the shady Temple of *Hecate* with the Ports of *Cocytus* and *Oblivion*, separated by barres of brasse : the originall of like fables. When landed on the other side, the body was brought before certaine judges, to whom if convinced of an evill life, they deprived it of buriall ; if otherwise they suffered it to be interred as aforesaid. So sumptuous were they



in these houses of death, so carefull to preserve their carcasses, forasmuch as the soule, knowing itselfe by divine instinct immortall, doth desire that the body (her beloved companion) might enjoy (as fur forth as may be) the like felicity : giving, by erecting such lofty Pyramides and those dues of funerall, all possible eternity."—*Sandys' Travels*, p. 134, 4th ed. 1637.

We have also in Mrs. Hamilton Gray's 'Tour to the Sepulchres of Etruria,' an account and copies of certain paintings of very great antiquity, and not improbably of considerably earlier date than Rome itself, seen by her on tombs and monuments in several parts of Etruria, the source of much of the Latin religion, as Egypt probably was of that of the Greek, such paintings evidently representing processions of souls conducted by good and evil spirits, the latter being black and hideous monsters with claws and flames and all the grotesque horrors of our own popular Satans.

In these instances and generally wherever we look, we find, with, it may be a few exceptions which when met with give us a certain natural shock of surprise, the like impression and belief entering in some shape into the grosser superstitions of all countries, even the most debased. Among these superstitions the modern *fetish* theory has now come opportunely to hand, to supply the comic element to the inquiry; and indeed, speaking in no spirit of idleness, as much care and study seems to have been given to this and other like theories by many a man of the highest and acutest intellect, as might have sufficed under proper direction to have made him an almost perfect whist-player.

But with the impression and belief and amid all the

superstitions above noticed, there was always an idea that the Supreme Power was a spirit unseen whose nature and attributes were unchallengeable, and into which none ever dared or desired to search; and in that they were probably happier in their simplicity, and better advised than some among ourselves. For our position perhaps the Great Spirit and happy hunting-grounds of the North American Indians might be cited as no unfavourable instance, both as to the idea of the Great Spirit, and as including that of a full and fitting reward for the illustrious and deserving dead, according to their only possible conception of such a thing. We would not however desire to press this special instance very strongly into the argument. We know not who these Indians are, or whence they came; and for our own part as long as seafaring men are bold and daring, winds inscrutable and ocean ocean, we shall continue to look upon them as sons of Adam, drifts from the old world bearing with them the traditions of their origin, coloured latterly by the enforced habits and necessities of their new country. But in any view we claim some benefit from the fact of their belief as a fact.

But then it is urged against us continually, upon the principle we suppose of *non vi sed sæpe cadendo*, that is to say, that an argument never dies, that the Old Testament itself contains no promise or express declaration of a future life appointed for man, and hinting very intelligibly that if it is not to be found there, it can hardly be looked for anywhere else. The charge has often been made, most commonly in a serene, easy-going, take-for-granted parenthesis, the book itself not being in much favour, and as often answered both directly and exegeti-

cally by many of our ablest divines, and we have no thought of dwelling here on a question already exhausted. But we are speaking of a covenant of grace made by God with fallen man; then how should a future life of reward be directly declared or made a term of such a covenant, while it pleased Him that the means of obtaining it should remain veiled? Life and immortality rightly understood were to come with the Messiah, who when He came was to tell us all things; and when He came, the world knew Him not, and it was not until the death on the Cross that the means of attaining this life and immortality were provided, accomplished and declared. He who by that death bestowed those means, was the first openly to manifest that life, and the true nature of the kingdom and mercies He then promised to all who should accept them. In the meantime, the Jews, the people chosen and appointed for the purpose, were received into what is known as the old covenant, by which they were bound to the perfect observance of a law declared amid thunderings and lightnings, and avouched by signs and wonders and apparitions too terrible to be looked on by unassisted man, and thus needing neither reason nor explanation to justify its claim to absolute submission and obedience.

But the new law delivered by the Messiah gave us a faithful and clear interpretation of the old, and by our present lights we now know, that that old law was a shadow and preparation of the new, and therefore with all its seeming hardness and exclusiveness, equally with that new law a covenant of mercy towards all mankind. With a few very rare exceptions all mankind, from the days of the righteous Noah (one of his own sons was the

first known transgressor after the flood) had become corrupt and abominable ; they had, like their predecessors before the deluge, been tried, judged and condemned, and had before God neither rights nor merits. Yet even such as they were, they were to be, not again destroyed but restored ; but not at once. We cannot conceive a sudden conversion from evil of a whole world ; we cannot conceive a gradual one without some Divine aid. The restoration was by Divine grace and assistance to proceed in the fulness of time from the issue of one man, found faithful and worthy of favour ; and for this it was necessary that the descendants of that man should be set apart from the rest of mankind and be and abide as a "peculiar" people, in order that they might be trained and prepared to receive the "Oracles of God," that is, to be entrusted, as far as they could then bear the light, with the knowledge and will of God for the ultimate benefit of all mankind. For this end it was first and above all things expedient, that they should be kept absolutely free from the idolatries and profanations of the nations surrounding them, and that as a guard against such surpassing mischief, intermingling of blood with those nations should with most extreme care be avoided ; without which precaution indeed, it is hard to see how the special privileges of the Jews or even their existence as a separate people could have been maintained as they truly have been even to this day throughout the world, not through any mercy or kindness of the nations among whom they have been dispersed, but much rather in spite of the most inordinate injustice, persecution and cruelty throughout all countries of the earth.

Herein too we may trace the origin and intent of the severe and exceptional policy of the Jews, both in some of their institutions and in their wars, as set forth with such terrible and proverbial fidelity in their own histories. Idolatry in a Jew was high treason against the majesty of his acknowledged Lord and King, Jehovah; yet so hard were the people, that for hundreds of years together they were continually lapsing into it in its worst forms, all being bad, and it was not until the return from the Captivity that we hear no more of it. From that time we read of much evil, but no more avowed idolatry. The synagogue had displaced the altar of Baal throughout the land. It would seem as if of design, that the Messiah should nowhere stand face to face with an idol in Jewry, but should come in His office, to instruct the prepared minds of those who in a proper spirit should then be looking for Him, and to denounce, not idolaters, but the Scribes and Pharisees, the perverters of the truth.

So far we have been keeping within the lines of the Jewish Scriptures. But that will not do: *Delenda est Carthago*. All commerce in Jewish ideas is to be abolished; and we are accordingly met with this objection from another quarter. "The idea of 'El Shaddai,' which you translate 'God Almighty,' is one which, whatever we may think of it ourselves, has in fact risen in the minds of some men by the light of the unassisted reason alone, without the aid and therefore without need of any objective revelation; and you yourselves confess that all you assume to know further of the attributes and dealings of this 'El Shaddai' you have derived from the Jewish records, the most important of which you take upon yourselves to ascribe, not to Ezra or some of his

successors, but to Moses who lived some fifteen hundred years before your Christian era ; but it is a fact established beyond all possibility of contradiction that there are in various parts of the world and especially towards the extreme East, vestiges and traditions of the facts and doctrines or theories contained in those records comprising even such mysteries as the Trinity and the Incarnation, long anterior to the times of Moses, even assuming him to have been the author of the Pentateuch or any part of it ; and that consequently those records are but legends of unknown origin and of no higher authority than those earlier ones, and consequently that those records if a revelation at all must have been one of things already known."

We have met somewhere with a parallel line of argument used by one who was described by the most distinguished of his cotemporaries, as a man of "much care and valour, but a little out of fashion" ; and it runs we think something in this way—"There was a town called Monmouth, and there was a town called Macedon, and in the comparisons between them the situations, look you, was both alike. There was a river in Macedon, and there was also moreover a river at Monmouth ; it was called Wye at Monmouth ; but it is out of my brains what was the name of the other river ; but 'tis all one, 'tis as like as my fingers is to my fingers, and there was water in both of these rivers ; and the one was in the land of the Welsh or Israelites, and the other in that of the Brahmins, and thus they agree indifferent well, for there is figures in all things ; and the Israelites dwelt apart in a land of their own, and never would have anything to do with the Brahmins or any other people, and

could never be got to sing their own songs in a strange land; and moreover they spoke a language called Hebrew; and had a family or caste of Priests, and another of Acolytes, and abstained from certain meats, and had very special customs and rites and ceremonies of worship of their own, unlike those of all other places, and from which they never departed; and moreover also the Brahmins had certain castes and caste-like laws and customs of their own unlike those of all other places, and spoke a language called Sanscrit; and some of the words in Sanscrit are very much like the same words in Hebrew, and some of those in Hebrew very like the same words in Sanscrit; and the Israelites derived their religion, laws and institutions from Moses, whose pedigree is traced up to the beginning of the world; but it is out of the brains of all men from whom the Brahmins derived theirs, and therefore it necessarily follows, that Moses must have borrowed all he taught the Israelites from the Brahmins."

But to return to the objection: we accept it as an admission that Moses did not invent the book Genesis, but no further. The question is not as to the date of that book, but as to the truth of the facts therein stated.

We have no reason to suppose or right to assume that the Mosaic account of the creation, and of the fall and promised restoration of man, was wholly new to those to whom the account was given, or that those great facts may not have been handed down by tradition from much earlier times, even in truth from the date of the fall itself, though imperfectly understood. We may even infer that Eve herself at one time believed that Cain her

first-born, "the man whom she had gotten from the Lord," was the promised seed who was to crush the serpent's head, that is, to restore mankind; and though she so egregiously erred in this, she not the less maintained an assured belief in a coming deliverer to proceed from herself, which belief is now shared by vast numbers of her remotest descendants.

There was sufficient in this tradition alone to furnish forth all these Eastern Mythologies, which at best do but show the strength of the tradition without in the least disclosing its origin, and it will be just as hard or just as easy to shift its birth from the Jew to the Brahmin, as it will be hereafter for Lord Macaulay's New Zealander standing amid the ruins of the cathedral and Statue of Queen Anne in St. Paul's churchyard, to maintain from the ball and cross in her hand, that London Church Town was the true birth-place of Christianity.

But then come the Jews in person from all parts, and speaking all the languages of the civilized world, and say—"Look upon us: are we not the past that now stand living and moving before you, biding the future that shall as surely be as that which now is? Are we not now and have we not been for nearly four thousand years past a people apart from all others? And have we not still Abraham for our father and Moses for our lawgiver? the same Moses who, as you well know and do not always very strongly deny, led us victoriously from the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage? This same Moses then told us of a God, of whom indeed we had heard something before, but whom we then knew more perfectly by the signs and wonders worked on our behalf, and delivered to us a law which was never to be



departed from in the slightest particular, because it was an ordinance of God Himself; and this law we have always observed down to the present day, even throughout our dispersion which has made the whole world a Babylon to us, without presuming to add to or detract from it in the least point. Moreover, this same Moses explained to us, and by the same Divine authority, that we were a favoured people because we were the issue of the faithful Abraham, he himself who told us all these things, being only the seventh \* in descent from him, and therefore quite unable even if he had wished it to mislead his hearers with any inventions of his own, dealing as he was, with matters so recent, and in many material points so familiar to all of them; and then he told us of a deliverer who was hereafter to be born of and among us, and to save us from all perils and humiliations and raise us to a height far above all other nations of the earth; and this deliverer we are to this day continually looking for, not being able to accept your Nazarene, of whom however we do not now think quite so hardly as did our fathers and the Emperor Julian, but agree with many of your own ordained ministers in considering him to have been like Marcus Aurelius or Epictetus, a good and wise

\* *Judaus loquitur.* We should say, the sixth; the Jews always counting in the *propositus* or first ancestor as one. Canon Farrar has noticed this in his 'Early Days of Christianity.' He might, if he had thought fit and proper, have quoted for this, the 'Merchant of Venice';

"*Shylock.* When Jacob graz'd his uncle Laban's sheep,  
This Jacob from our holy Abraham was  
The third possessor; aye, he was the third."

Act 2, sc. 3.

Thucydides might have arranged the difference by translating the last line literally, *τρίτος αὐτός*, the third of three.

man in his way, but nothing more. But this Moses also told us that we must be faithful as was Abraham, and 'observe all the statutes and ordinances he gave us to keep them,' and that if we did not, our privileges would be deferred, and that we should be scattered and humiliated through all lands ; but not utterly destroyed, for that there should always be a faithful remnant among us, revering and duly observing those statutes and ordinances, and looking forward with a firm trust to an ultimate restoration, which even if it should not prove to be, as we once hoped, a territorial one, will, we feel assured, be not the less a complete and wonderful one. And has not all this been accomplished thus far to the very letter ? You will find a faithful remnant in many a Ghetto, to which your political affinities among yourselves, have through so many ages consigned us. Then do we not stand before you, the antediluvian skeleton-hunters that you are, a perfect, living, continuous fulfilment of a plain-speaking prophecy delivered upwards of three thousand years ago ? And to what other people throughout all the annals of recorded time has such a lasting grace, such an exceptional strength of endurance under persecution and dispersion, ever been accorded ? You will say perhaps to the Gipsies : and we shall thank you for it as we have so often had occasion to do for other kindnesses ; but the Gipsies have nothing to show for themselves but themselves, and for aught that is really known of them, may as well as not be the issue of a few overlooked stragglers of the drowned host of Pharaoh out of the Red Sea. You tell us in your small solemn way that history is philosophy teaching by example ; and so it may be when there is any example to show ; but we

are outside all your teaching examples ; for how by them can you account for us now standing before you and contradicting and confuting you and them continually in every possible way, by anything to be found in your histories ? Is there not somewhere a term dropped out of your calculations ? Are you not Babbage's eccentric chuck come somehow to grief ? ”

“ Speaking from our own never-surrendered vantage-ground of the Promise, we accept the Englishman as the best type of unprivileged manhood, and may hereafter, when he knows better than he does now, account him a decent enough Proselyte of the Gate ; but who was his father ? How say you then that we are the sweepings of Hindooism ? or why parade your philological Sanscrit fopperies to us ? We present to you the law that Moses wrote, in the language that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob spoke, and what more would you have ? As to your taunt of our not looking to a future state because not expressly declared in the law, we hardly deem it worthy of serious notice. We never doubted it. The law was given to us, not to demonstrate the existence of God which we knew before, and with it that death was only a removal, but to declare His will and direct our ways ; more than this was revealed to the righteous only, for we have ever held that faithful fervent prayer and its answer are divine realities, and that he who is in the Spirit is truly in that other world we truly look for. Are we all Sadducees ? They were never a leading or very ancient sect among us, and how could they have been a sect at all unless the general belief was against them ? Is it not recorded in our archives, and was it not always the general persuasion among us, that the soul of Samuel

rose from its place of rest after death, and spoke with Saul or his confederate at Endor? But how could Samuel have a soul to do this, and not a soul to live?"

Thus far the Jew, patient, unaccommodating and proud under a dispensation of suffering, which free philosophy simply derides.

The first conception of Deity is El Shaddai, God Almighty, unseen, unknown, but true and unchallengeable; but around that original conception soon gathered from their several dens, first idolatries with their golden calves and other dissimilitudes; next philosophies, cutting it up both with the grain and against the grain into metaphysical chips and sweepings, in such a way and to such extent, that he who in these days simply puts down a philosophy must re-approach God.

The idea of a Messiah or deliverer from temporal wrong and suffering, must have been a welcome and natural one; for when was there ever a time when such a deliverer was not needed and longed for? Such a deliverer must have been clothed with some visible and superhuman but always anthropomorphic attributes, and thus easily within the measure and reach of our natural powers of conception.

But the idea of a spiritual Messiah who is to convince us of sin and to free us from its power and penalties for and through all time, and to offer new and spiritual life to every soul on earth, rises far above that of a temporal deliverer, even to the fulness of perfect God and man in one, far above our unassisted reach. This is what we understand by the term Incarnation, as distinguished from the inspiration and other fancies of the debased

Arianism of many in these times. The term itself is to us a familiar and accepted one, though the truth itself is as far beyond the grasp of our natural intellectual faculties as ever. We receive it unconditionally as a revealed truth ; otherwise not at all.

But then we are referred to the Avatars of Hindoo Mythology, either as being the original source of our doctrinal incarnation, and consequently of equal authority with it, or as raising an irresistible presumption that it is equally with them a mere human imagination or device. We should, we think, be rather inclined to infer *a priori* that where similar legends of unknown origin are met with in lands far apart, the simpler and grander one in form would approve itself as the source of the others ; but further, and to say nothing of the monstrous barbarism both in form and details of these Avatars (most of which indeed were not incarnations at all in the proper sense of the word, but only supposed visible manifestations of Deity in some visible objective form, without any assumption of the nature or feelings of man himself) what can be said of a plurality of incarnations of the Supreme God of all, or of one who shared His essence ? for be it remembered, that if the powers that are said to have been thus incarnate, did not stand in that relation to the Supreme, but were inferior powers, they were but ministers, and the idea of God Incarnate is gone for ever, and all these famous Avatars are reduced at once to the rank of wild and baseless fables. Every succeeding Avatar of the Supreme must of necessity convict every previous one of failure or incompleteness and the Eternal Himself of weakness or indecision. Nor let it be said that the Christian Incarnation is open to any such

objection ; that Incarnation was one abiding act. When Christ took the manhood into His Godhead, He took it for once and all, and retains it still, from the instant of His visible Ascension unchanged and unchangeable for ever ; different and glorified in outward form, but perfect man always. In the Resurrection we do not rise to meet a stranger, but One who has Himself known our sorrows, and who will Himself share with them the privileges He grants to His chosen. He who would deprive Christianity of this persuasion, may as well take everything else, for He will leave us nothing but fear and terror, without refuge and without hope.

Belief was not always a reproach, and if it be an observed and never-failing fact, that belief in this question raises our thoughts and aspirations, ennobles and gives a new and fuller grace and dignity to our existence, bringing with it new life and strength continually, as surely as unbelief does the reverse in leaving us the slaves of every rumour that flies, each of us in bonds to every fellow-bondsman who can argue with more scholastic skill than himself, we know not why it should be resisted ; save that discontent, which is always accompanied by a certain notable sense of self-righteousness, is a very universal and popular feeling ; and inconsistency is the perquisite of error, and between these two, much may always be done all round the compass by any one working with a will.

No one ever thinks of disputing the consistent integrity and honour of the high-minded sceptic in all the affairs of this life either in thought or act, nor is it in the least doubted that it arises from his innate love of the good. But in abandoning all religious feeling (and there can be

none without full and assured belief) he leaves that higher range of thought and sense of duty in which alone, through direct communion with Him who only can be perfectly good, the utmost exaltation of our nature is to be sought for and found. Few know what true and faithful prayer is; he who receives no answer to his prayer, has prayed unworthily, or perchance has but turned his pale face to the wall in his trouble, and for all his rent garments and broken words, has not prayed at all. It is a hard thing to pray truly at first; but this once achieved, it will become more and more easy, and as secure as the return home of the prodigal son, for such a return it most surely is. But the season for prayer must not be neglected; for it may not return.

But what of Plato's Great Spirit and shadowy Trinity? Why truly in comparison with modern uncompromising hard materialism, and save that as a scheme it seems to show a tendency to gauge the Infinite by finite laws and measures, not without some suspicion of a delegation of office and authority from one power to another and consequently a subordinate one, not very much that need be cavilled at. He who said "Lo, I come to do thy will. In the volume of thy book it is written," was in no proper sense a delegate. He came of his own sovereign will, which was His before all worlds, and not only agreeable to, but always one with that of the Father, and the volume of the book he spake of was equally and in the same full sense His own.

As to the shadowy Trinity, that we take to have been no more than an idea subjective in Plato's own mind, drawn from his observation of his own experience in his own

undertakings ; to wit, the will, the design and the act ; these are in us distinguishable operations, and they are truly enough three ; and they have also a semblance of unity thus far, that if you withdraw one of them, the other two vanish and nothing remains ; for you cannot will without a design, nor design without a will, and if the act does not follow, either there has been no will or no design, or none effectual. No one who has ever done anything whatever in the whole course of his life, can fail to see that this will, design and act, have always been three separate instruments or forces leading to one result. It is an accepted rule in and outside all philosophies, and plainly deducible from Spinoza's definition of God above quoted, that you cannot make the infinite the subject of analysis ; and though it may be allowable to say that these three forces or attributes are by virtue of His infinity necessarily one in the Creative Divine Mind, they are only so in the way in which all His other attributes, even such, for instance, as justice and mercy in Him are one ; and if you will have them for a Trinity, you do but take one out of an infinity of Trinities to be constructed and disconcerted or analysed at pleasure.

This platonic Trinity may be a grand idea viewed relatively to what may be found in all other uninspired philosophies, but it is not a real Trinity, still less the Gospel Trinity ; certainly not the Trinity of three persons in one, shadowed forth for our instruction in Genesis, and underlying all the later Scriptures, even down to and including the full and open declaration and command so plainly and distinctly given in the concluding verses of St. Matthew.



Amid all this wreck and ruin of clashing philosophies, we speak not of ourselves, but as we have been taught. The Trinity we confess with all its consequences has been revealed to us, and without this revelation we should be dumb on the subject for ever.

There is a cloud that is apt at times to overshadow the spirits of weak believers on contemplating the humiliations and indignities suffered by our Lord. To them we would say : First, if there be such a thing as the grace of God, who shall set bounds to that grace ? Next, in words not our own, and not as entirely accepting a great idea for an article of absolute faith, thus—"There is a substantial archetype of every earthly thing from a flower to a nation eternal in the heavens :—The archetype of man is that of a spirit temporarily united to an animal body, and being such must if it exist anywhere exist eternally in the mind of God, and derive its existence from Him, and must possess all the faculties and properties of all men in the highest perfection ; and further it must be a son, for every man is born ; and it being agreed that he could owe his existence to none but God himself, he must be the son of God ; and if so, the perfect and exact likeness of his father. But goodness is an invisible faculty of the will, and known only from outward acts and relations, and the perfection of manhood is best shown in conditions of humiliation and suffering, and therefore it is in such conditions that God would desire to show this perfect archetype to man, and except on such conditions we could never comprehend the perfection of his nature."

But this is not all ; this perfect archetype has been shown to man, and the reasons and objects of his being

shown, and the conditions of such act of grace never to be withdrawn or departed from and amounting to an absolute command, have been fully declared. Now it must be admitted, for we have many and great and bright examples to show for the assertion, that there is in man a secret yearning to attain to some degree of likeness to this archetype. It may be strong or weak in each, it may be bright and clear or but as smoking flax, or it may dwindle to the merest spark, or it may turn to irreverence, the mask of fear and forerunner of hate, but at first, however slight, it always exists in every man that is born : otherwise grace or redemption could come to none. But in these latter days this archetype is always present with us for example and for aid ; we know to what we are to conform, and by what means we may do so, and attain that likeness in which David trusted at some time to awaken. We know too, and sometimes perhaps the more we deny it the more we know it, that we cannot fail except through our own perverseness, and that want of success is simply consequence or retribution, always sure and always just, for that perverseness or still more perilous sloth.

The pious Jew under the Old Dispensation, who although the custodian of the Promise understood it not, knew God only by his name and revealed attributes of Jehovah, and read his own privileges from what he found stated of them in the Books of the Law and the Prophets, which he claimed as his own exclusive charter. His aim and only aspiration was, by legal cleanness to be enabled to approach, and by fervent and accepted prayer to obtain a present and direct communion with Jehovah, and thus rise to the degree and highest privileges of the

holiest of the prophets, even of Elias who was to return again as the fore-runner of the Messiah. To him the time of prayer was the happiest, the most joyous and most absorbing instant of his life. The Jews indeed had a saying, that such a one would not desist from his prayer though a venomous serpent were coiled round his ankles, about to strike. They deemed also that he might by his persevering piety rise to such a state of spiritual exaltation, as to feel by inward monition any accidental ceremonial uncleanness which he might have contracted, at the instant of contracting it, which uncleanness in others less gifted would give no sensible token.

Herein too we may trace some reason why the future state should be sparingly referred to in the Old Testament, which is but the opening page of the Book of Life. The aspiration of such a Jew was not wholly unfounded, though coupled with less knowledge than may now be derived from the completed Scriptures, springing from the same grace ; and who shall trammel that grace with rules ? But this state of the pious Jew with its privileges recognized in the Old Testament as a visitation of the Spirit, and sometimes attested by visible signs, could have in it no confession or element of mortality, for an answered prayer is an immediate communion with the Eternal, exceeding all his thoughts and exceeding all possible imaginings. It may be said, that this could have been the lot of very few : but Judaism of old was necessarily a religion of outward ceremonial observances, which indeed were truly prophecies, as being but a shadow of better things to come not yet fully disclosed ; it could not well have been otherwise, as shown in a ritual of unexampled magnificence, served by vast

assemblages of Priests and Levites wholly devoted to its due maintenance and honour. Amidst a people fully conscious and proud of their peculiar privileges the pious formalist of the better classes must have been the observed of all observers, an example to all, a perfect type in their eyes of the exalted Jew. He must have imparted some at least of his superficial character to the multitudes around him, "who knew not the law." What he boasted of in himself, that his observers with a listless indifference accepted as true and sufficient, though they laboured not to gain it for themselves.

But this piety and zeal of the devout Jew under the Old Dispensation were not according to full knowledge. We except of course cases of manifest inspiration. He had no idea of a suffering Messiah, for in his own thoughts he was always less sinful than all the Gentile world, and was therefore outside the truth. No true Christian can pray as did the Pharisee who "went up into the Temple with the Publican to pray." To the Jew under the old covenant, there could be no life without his retirements for prayer and observances, for they were of command. But we cannot follow him into his retirement. We cannot read his thoughts there. We cannot tell what spirit he took with him into his retirement ; we may judge a little what he brought from it. He knows nothing who does not know that his prayer may be sin. The Jews, with a few inappreciable intervals, have always been under Divine chastisement, even continuously down to the present day, and yet are not forgotten, nor have they lost either their hopes or privileges. It is very striking to meet in their historical books after reading the account of some signal deliverance, with such expressions as, "and

the land had rest forty years," or during the remainder of the reign of some king favoured for his righteousness.

But we must go back a little. The idea of the Eternal caring for man is not very far from that of an Incarnation ; which although far too high for our own human imaginings to invent or conceive *a priori*, may and must be accepted when presented to us in life as a reality. There was ill accord between God and man. Man had been disobedient and broken the conditions on which he received the gift of life. But God being eternal, His will could never change, nor could the race be restored until some true and perfect man should come and in his own person fully perform the conditions and pay the penalty incurred. This the natural man already condemned could never do. By Him who did come, the Eternal Will was not changed but accomplished ; the old law with its condemnation passed away, and mankind came under a new one, subject to new conditions, free and open to all who will accept them, always, even to the end. He who worked this for us was not a created being. To this we would return for yet a small space presently.

But this, the scheme of our Church, coherent throughout, without flaw and sufficing for all needs, is denounced by some because, and if you press them fairly home, only because, appealing to feeling against, as it is alleged, the reason. But who or what gave us this feeling, and for what purpose ? or how should a healing Spirit in its office do otherwise than appeal to and command the feeling which Itself had prepared and created ? Is there not an aggressive element in the Antitheism of the present day, a slightly veiled *a priori* aversion to the mere

idea of God? We may speak very plainly on our side before we rise to the measure of the hard words used by some against us on the other, but is not all Sceptical Philosophy judged by its results, merely a prolonged, monotonous repetition? If we speak of a Supreme Intelligent Power, we are answered indifferently, *peut être*, or,

“*Horas non numero nisi serenas.*”

“I have set my dial in the shade, and it gives no sign.”

We have even been told that originally the religion of Israel was polytheism; that “monotheism *begins* to show itself distinctly in the writings of the prophets of the eighth century B.C.; that the belief that Jehovah was the only God, sprang out of the ethical conception of his being; that the older monotheism of the period before those prophets has no existence; that a nascent monotheism only is to be found in the prophets of the eighth century; that in the last quarter of the seventh century monotheism is taught in explicit terms in Deuteronomy, and Jeremiah, *Westminster Review* N. S. No. 124, p. 518 in notice of *Hibbert Lectures*.” We do not quite see who answers for this position, but there it is, and the case seems to be made out, like many other things something in this way.

“Israel (*Hebrew* a prince or favoured of God) was at first the same person as Jacob, and the name was given him by One who told him that he was the God of his fathers Abraham and Isaac, and also of himself; from which it is plainly to be inferred that he was not the God of other men or people, but only one, though perhaps the greatest, of many other Gods. But Israel was afterwards a great people, the descendants of the first Israel, and they

took the name from him with all its traditions ; and so far the first position above quoted is clearly made out."

"It is also not to be denied that perhaps a large majority of this people down as far as the eighth century did in a sense worship other gods, for so did Solomon ; that the offence of Jeroboam who is always spoken of as 'he who caused Israel to sin,' was a political one only, viz. in setting up his golden calves in Bethel and Dan, and thus drawing the people away from Jerusalem, the appointed and established centre of the government of the Jews, and does not at all exclude, but rather assists the idea of a plurality of gods, the true principle being, so many idols, so many gods ; that besides, Jeroboam's idea of the calves was not a new one, being plainly borrowed from that of the golden one at Horeb, and consequently if there were polytheists to be denounced in the eighth century B.C., there must have been like antecedents to be denounced long before that period, if there had been any to denounce them. It may indeed be said that a majority of polytheists implies a minority, however small, of monotheists ; but a small minority is practically always in the wrong, and is never regarded ; a criminal, for instance, condemned to death is commonly enough in a minority of one against the whole world, but who cares for his minority ? It has thus been shown that polytheism prevailed in Israel from a very early date, but that there is no appreciable evidence of monotheism among the people before the prophets of the eighth century B.C. ; for the monotheist David was a psalmist rather than a prophet, and very much of an egotist, and Deuteronomy was not written by Moses, and therefore the author of it must have been contemporary with Jeremiah ; and the

position above quoted is thus fully made out in all its parts."

But we have an objection of our own to interpose. All who have ever given any attention to the question, know perfectly well that the word Jehovah as we write it does not render the true pronunciation of the name of God revealed to Moses, and also how and why the word came to be so written, but no one now knows with any certainty what is the true name; nor is the question now material to any but the Jews who caused the ambiguity; but in all Christian churches the word Jehovah from its understood import is and must always be held most sacred, hallowed by long custom, and rarely taken in vain even by the most profane; and we object to such speculative gibberish as "Jahvehism" being used in a controversy involving so high a subject. It is fast becoming the shibboleth of a party, and has an air of intentional irreverence and (a piece of pedantry at the best) we can only count it as a worthy addition to the Tale of a Tub.

But to return from this short digression. We think that apart from the honourable zeal of the more highly gifted in the search after truth for its own sake, which we have never thought of assailing, there are causes outside the working logic of the question that warp the unguarded mind.

All honour to science and her true and legal servants and followers. We accept with gratitude and amazement the ever-increasing benefits which they are so continually conferring on us. We should indeed like nothing so well as to see the subject of Archimedes running through the streets of Syracuse half-naked in the



cause of science, and shouting, "*Εὐρηκα, Εὐρηκα*, aliquot be praised ! gold is heavier than water," worthily treated by a select body of Royal Academicians, and carefully laid up in their traditional Diploma Gallery.

But the domain of science is limited. She may be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the material world, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and the fowl of the air, and over every living and dead thing that moveth or doth not move on the face of the earth ; but in all this she will never find God ; and if there be no other world, she will never find Him ; for He being a Spirit, or if the term be preferred, Spiritual, must be searched for, not among the properties and accidents of dead matter, but in the living phenomena of living spirit. In a search so made, there is nothing that enslaves, nothing that prohibits the free exercise of the natural reasoning faculties ; but there is a wisdom that meets them, and draws them to its own service, raising and ennobling our thoughts, and giving us a new life by a sensible communion with the grand object of our search, at once and for ever.

The true man of science now freely admits that there is always something beyond the subject and phenomena he deals with, and that there is a wisdom above his reach ; but if so, it cannot but be a halting and mischievous policy to seek to express in dead material forms that which is the cause, not only of those material forms, but of far higher spiritual forms and qualities, which we know must exist, but of which some have not yet reached our apprehension, being in truth not of this life. To us it seems a tame truism to say that spirit which has no parts cannot be shown in forms of matter which is all

parts. We repeat that the first form of life and thought is as inscrutable to us as the first form of matter; we perceive indeed that there are in ourselves certain temporary bonds and adaptations between spirit and matter; and we see well enough what becomes of our material frames on death; but the former, the only source to us of all that is good or desirable, is so exalted and seemingly boundless, that it is offended and dishonoured by illustrations proper only to a material world.

And is it not so?—"The relation of the Deity to His creation is plainly shown in the infinite sections of an infinite cone, spreading infinitely round infinite centres, each situate somewhere in an infinite right line running from the apex to the base, and each section invisible except at the circumference, where it is limited perforce by our sensuous apprehensions, the centre of each being also unseen because we are unable to get at the right point of view, and all this, which is plainly true of physical things, is equally true of spiritual things" (for spirit, whether anything more than sublimated matter or not, must by sure analogy also spring from an unseen central unity or force, and is always sending forth infinite tentacles or rays towards an infinite circumference which it never reaches) "and thus the familiar diagram" (the registered trade-mark we believe of the manufacturers of certain patent medicines) "of an equilateral triangle inscribed in a circle and touching the circumference with its angles, is approved to all as a happy and perfect expression of the infinite, the created or triangle being always less than the circle in which it is inscribed, and limitless because that is infinite."

Now, this is true mathematical theology, showing us,

as it were, the ship of the world in ribs in the building dock, but nothing of the final means and appliances by which, like a thing of life, it is to traverse the infinite ocean of the universe at its own will and pleasure. For an infinite of time and space, things existing only and subjective in the idea of succession and place, it may pass well enough, but only as an ingenious toy. But what of the invisible formless moral attributes of spirit, which whether, "sublimated matter" or not, is still spirit? It may possibly be that we do sometimes find in ourselves, if we look very hard, something like a shadow of these "tentacles or rays," thrown out from our own finite central unities towards an unattainable circumference, as objects float into our intellectual view; but how can the "observed laws of thought," in ourselves apply to, or reach the infinite? Do you not strip it of its infinitude in the very act of making the attempt so to apply them? We send out our rays and tentacles at the beginning of our reveries, but how can the Infinite begin to think? or how can that which possesses in itself all forms of thought at once, and yet has neither beginning nor ending, be expressed by a diagram which has no existence without all these three visibly displayed to the mind's eye? We would not grudge the happiness of an equilateral or even of a scalene triangle in a circle, but we have seen something like the trade-mark referred to above, in which the three sides of the created triangle were made to cut the circumference of the infinite circle; are we to infer from that the possibility of the finite outstripping the infinite?

If we on our part say that God is the living central light and power of the universe, or use other like expres-

sions in speaking of the Deity, that is allowable and harmless in us who are known to admit an Eternal Spiritual and Personal First Cause of all things; not that we assume that we thereby worthily express Him or His attributes, but because we speak avowedly in metaphor, reverently and in the only way in which we can speak at all of what is continually in our thoughts. Even if we venture on such an expression as, "*Deus est locus Mundi non vero Mundus locus ipsius*," *Cosri*, B 4, *in note*, p. 265, we speak consciously in metaphor, meaning only that all things exist only in and through God; and if at any time you resent our metaphor, you do but resent a metaphor, without in the least affecting the truth which we have thus ineffectually endeavoured to shadow forth.

But to you, your air-drawn diagrams and metaphors are themselves absolute, necessary, eternal, increate, realities and truths; and in your estimation as materialists, and for all purposes of your argument, matters of life and death. There is no place for reverential feeling in the question so treated. There is no ideal of goodness that we can find in Spinoza's definition of God. There may be fear and wonder, but no true reverence for a half demonstrated scientific God, who takes no step to meet or acknowledge us. Yet without due reverential feeling and for the reasons above stated, we can no more regard the conclusions of philosophies as real efforts towards the discovery of truth, than we can look upon a contested election as a religious ceremony.

But this is not quite all; the discovery that all these non-existent lines, cones and curves at first known only by certain air-drawn pictures or diagrams in the mind,

were capable of being expressed in algebraic terms of properties and powers of numbers, must have been to you something like a new lease of life and potentiality ; because numbers being clearly co-eval and co-universal with the first creation or motion or energy of things, must necessarily be all comprehensive laws, forces, facts, causes and effects in one ; so that if by any means it had happened or should now happen, that the velocity of a falling body did not or should not vary inversely with the square of the distance, the properties of numbers being thus broken, and the action of the universal energy disturbed, either the body itself could never have been such as it is, or would have turned or must now turn to something else ; and therefore numbers, speaking to us in mathematical and algebraic formulæ, are not merely the expressions, but the governing causes of all phenomena, be those phenomena what they may.

But if numbers are so effective, they must have orders, degrees and privileges among themselves.

“ SCENE, A COUNCIL CHAMBER.

SENI, *a sage, or wise man.* Attendants setting chairs for a Council about to be held.

*Seni.*

In every earthly thing,

First and most principal is place and time.

*(counts the chairs)*

Eleven ! an evil number ! set twelve chairs,

Twelve ! twelve signs hath the Zodiac : five and seven,

The holy numbers, include themselves in twelve.

Eleven is transgression ; eleven o'ersteps

The Ten Commandments—

Five is the soul of man ; for even as man

Is mingled up of good and evil, so

The five is the first number that's made up

Of even and odd.”

*Schiller's Piccolomini, act 2, sc. 1, Coleridge's Translation.*

There is a peculiar excellence in this view of Seni's in that it sets the religious question on its right footing and at its proper distance once for all. Numbers are to be observed, even in the setting of chairs, because they, having relations with space and time and all things that therewith consist, are necessarily as much the true laws and links of all order as anything else can be ; and thus the commandments, as well implied by Seni, are to be obeyed, not because they are commandments, but because they are ten ; and ten is a number, and a very distinguished one, because it completes the first stage of the decimal notation. But number does not exist without some subject ; and algebraically  $x^0 = 1$ , that is to say, every number before it is raised to some power, that is to say, before it is anything, is unity ; but unity is infinite, because all is one, i. e. we have no idea of number until we have that of plurality ; and plurality is infinite, because every number is greater or less than every other number ; therefore numbers, the constituents of plurality, fixing as they do upon all things as they come into being, must govern all things, including all subsidiary forces, and are thus the true primary creative forces of the universe. And this is science, inasmuch as science is not the less science because it deals with tentative approximations to things unknown, and this is the consummation of all approximations.

Revelation in our time stands necessarily upon some historical basis ; but all history being liable to error, must in these questions be taken to be antecedently incredible ; and by whatever strength of evidence sustained can never exceed a plausible hypothesis ; and Letters being a republic, all hypotheses are equals in the

eyes of philosophy. Nor practically in these days and on these subjects can any hypothesis ever in the long run be either stronger or weaker than any other.

There is sometimes much inter-federal courtesy between rival philosophies when the differences between them are not too small to admit of it without destroying the subject altogether. Now all philosophies deal with hypotheses, and in their dealings among themselves the maintainers of one hypothesis will sometimes unobservedly slide quietly into an acceptance of the views of those of another, without open acknowledgment. But how do they all agree in treating a scheme laying down positions, some of which, and very important ones too, have been already accepted by themselves as concluded truths if only that scheme be called a Revelation, and not a proven hypothesis? Do they not reject it, not for itself but for its name's sake?

But does any one not yet know that the Scriptures are accepted by us, not on circumstantial external assurances, which we nevertheless have been led to and do believe, but because of the internal evidence of the truths therein declared, and their irrefragable truth and consistency at all points? and that if the mountain had come to Mahomet, we should not have held ourselves bound to turn Mahometans? Let us add here that the very divisions, heresies and schisms which have distracted without destroying the true church during so many hundreds of years past, are, we consider, fair, reasonable and strong arguments on our side.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by

him, and without him was not any thing made that was made."

These are the opening words of the Fourth Gospel ; and it is said that they are not irreconcilable with what we have all read and heard of the great Spirit of the North American Indians and Plato ; and more especially with the Demiurgus of the latter ; and that as neither these Indians nor Plato were inspired, so neither need the author of these words have been so ; as it must be the extreme of rashness to look for a Supernatural Revelation of what the unassisted human intellect can discover for itself ; and further, that as the Fourth Gospel itself is only an exegesis or unfolding of the thesis laid down in those opening words ; and as the writer, whoever he may have been, manifestly knew all about the mythology of the Septuagint, and must, being himself a writer in Greek, have been familiar with the works of Plato ; it necessarily follows that if there are any parts of this Gospel which might have been written by Plato, the whole must have been taken from him, and that the author must therefore have been, as respects his mythology, an Alexandrian Jew ; as regards his philosophy, a Platonist, and as an historian, a Romancer.

We should be among the last to complain of this mode of putting the objection ; but we state it here, because it seems to us no inapt instance of the spirit of predetermined doubt of which we spoke above.

But the words quoted above from this Gospel must be taken in direct connection with those immediately following, which run thus :

"In him was life ; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness ; and the darkness



comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light. That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

We can hardly conceive so unworthily of the author of this Gospel as to suppose that he committed to writing the opening sentences above quoted (which we may perhaps be allowed to call here without prejudice to any question, the leading philosophic idea of his work) without having thought out what was to follow, or that the "Word" there spoken of, was any other than the very "light" afterwards declared to have been borne witness to by the Baptist, and more fully described by himself. The meaning is perfectly clear, that the "Word" and the "light" thus spoken of was the very Christ whom St. John the Apostle had known and walked and conversed with and followed as a man, and confessed and worshipped as God; but if God, then this same Christ must to the apprehension of the writer have been in the beginning and with God.

The charge against the authenticity of this Gospel as regards its being the work of St. John the Divine and so far as its internal evidence is concerned, seems to be, that from the frequent recurrence of Platonic ideas and modes of thought and the general colour of the whole, and setting aside the narrative and miraculous portions as

representing only the popular rumour, it must have been written by some one unknown, largely imbued with Greek philosophy, and consequently Platonically prejudiced, and with private ends of his own to answer.

We must not affect to underrate the importance of this question. If it can be shown that there are in this Gospel any doctrinal positions demonstrably taken from or resting upon uninspired heathen wisdom or philosophy, not only must those positions be set aside as human inventions, but the entire Fourth Gospel is discredited, and the weight and authority of the church that has so long accepted and maintained it as genuine, authentic and true, weakened and impaired ; for we find and confess in it vital points of doctrine beyond what are to be found in the Synoptics, and without which consequently the one entire Gospel must be considered incomplete.

We are not in the least afraid of confessing thus much ; we are much more suspicious of the modern spirit of give-way and compromise in these questions. We have in our ranks some frightened beings who are not yet fully persuaded that we cannot by any possibility fail on any material point whatever. We should like to make such fall-aways do penance every time they change their minds by standing in white sheets, typical of the absence of settled ideas, in Institutions and lecture-rooms, until they hear something either to confirm or end their apprehension, or sink under the trial.

This heathen wisdom or philosophy or Platonism or Neo-platonism or whatever it may be called tomorrow, must however be reasonably made out. An occasional coincidence is nothing. We are in no way concerned to dispute the greatness of Plato or to contend that there is

no truth in him whatever. If we do in fact find anything more than such occasional or accidental coincidence of thought or statement in the Fourth Gospel and Plato or any other heathen writer, we are bound to recognize that we are dealing with what has been an uninspired thought of earlier date than the text we are considering and upon which we rely ; but we may and do look upon the text above quoted from the Fourth Gospel, as an introduction to or rather as the foundation of all that follows it, and for our fuller and more complete understanding of it, refer to and consult the diverging contexts both of the Gospel itself and of the Platonic Dialogues, or other philosophical writings from which the difficulty is said to arise, so as in this way to arrive at the intent and meaning of and the conclusions to be drawn from each ; then if that Gospel context carry us far away into fields of thought undreamt of by Plato and untouched by any scheme of heathen philosophy, we accept the whole truth declared as proceeding wholly from the author of that Gospel, and from no other source whatever. In this way our belief has become faith, and in this way upon those points in which any heathen philosophy and the Gospel teaching happen to agree, we look at once and unreservedly to what we deem the higher sanction. We ourselves believe that the light of nature alone sufficiently indicates an Intelligent First Cause, and by that light alone many have accepted such a Cause. Beyond this there is nothing left for us but revelation, and the argument reverts again and for ever to the question whether that which we have received be a divine revelation or not—a subject to be treated reverently in its full entirety, and not inconsiderately as an occasion for catching criticisms.

If we accept St. John himself as the author of this Gospel, the charge falls at once. For who, and what was he? A Galilean, young certainly at the time of his call, warm-hearted and impetuous (*Boanerges*, a son of thunder) single-minded, constant, and withal, as appears from his acknowledged writings, especially mild and affectionate; brought up under and firmly holding to the Jewish Law and Prophets, and above all to the hope of the Messiah; but from his humble position without any pretension to being "a Master in Israel," how should he have had any Platonic training or bias? It is well known that there was at the time of his call among the Jews at large a general expectation of the speedy advent of the Messiah. We may call to mind here the expressions of the earliest disciples, "We have found him who should come." It was among these, that the young St. John accepted and left all and followed Christ as the Messiah but at first with no adequate conception of his true character. This he afterwards learnt from Christ himself, and from none besides. When therefore the time came that he was thus fully instructed as to this, and learnt and admitted the wondrous fact that Christ was not only the natural man standing before and conversing with him, but that he had been before Abraham, that he had power in and over the unseen world, that he was one with God His father, and was Himself God, St. John was at once in possession of a wisdom counted by himself beyond price, which could admit to him of neither addition, diminution, qualification or expression, that should not proceed from or be dictated by the same teacher; aught from any other source would have been felt and rejected by him as a profanation, and so strongly and unhesitatingly, that we cannot with any

show of reason or probability infer as possible even an unconscious entrance of any such heathen element into his thoughts.

If we are to assume that St. John was not the author of this Gospel, we have still all the internal evidence above referred to left, at but one and no very distant remove. We know the deep reverence and authority accorded in the earliest times of the Church, first to the Apostles and those Disciples who had seen and conversed with Christ in the flesh ; and a little later on, to those who had seen and been taught by those Apostles and Disciples in person ; and such, if he were not St. John himself or writing under his immediate dictation, must have been the author's feelings and relations to the great Apostle.

The author then of this Gospel, so early and widely accepted, must in this alternative have possessed a deep sense of his privilege in being admitted so near to St. John's person and intimacy, and have reverently accepted every word that passed from his lips. The most excessive assailants have hardly insisted that the writer was an impostor or anything less than a worthy follower of St. John, sincerely desirous to record truly, closely and reverently his very words ; and if so, his record must be true. Unless the writer was thus truly an Evangelist, he must have been a controversialist with some private view of his own to establish, and in that case would hardly, we think, have opened with the bold words above quoted, the key note of the whole Gospel, but rather have led up to them by degrees ; those words as they stand being the sum in brief of the most doctrinal and abstruse and, as it unhappily appeared in

times not much later, the most contested truths. St. John himself might well enough have done so, for with whom could he have had a controversy? In his hands or under his immediate dictation the work must have been, as it purports to be, truly a record of what he had witnessed and been inspired to declare. As such it was received by the early Church, who, always longing for yet more and more light as the living witnesses were departing from among them, would yet be only the more jealous critics of anything coming from secondary or less privileged sources. And such criticism, being aggressive, would have brooked no delay, but would have appeared at once.

We all know enough of the early divisions in the Church, and the daring hardihood of the many-minded Gnostics; but in the supposed case of the author of the Fourth Gospel being any other than St. John himself, we should be rather disposed to look for excessive conversion and unresisting submission to the letter of the Apostle's teaching, than for a tendency to any private views of the writer's own, and least of all to anything in profane philosophy.

The first of the three Epistles commonly attributed to St. John commences with these words, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled, of the word of life; (for the life was manifested and we have seen *it* and bear witness and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the

Father and with his Son Jesus Christ."—1 *John* ch. I. vv. 1, 2, 3. Then comparing these words with those quoted above from the Gospel, the former the opening and governing position of the Epistle the latter of the Gospel, it seems hard to dissociate the authorship of the two or (to use (of course *honoris causâ*) the very suggestive expression of one not quite of our own way of thinking in the question) to look upon them as other than the "invention" of one and the same mind. We think indeed that the question may with quite as much propriety be said to be, who wrote the Epistle, as who wrote or dictated the Gospel? The two passages quoted are not word for word the same, the one heading a compendium of vital truths, the other an occasional and more limited teaching; yet so far as the "Word" is concerned, they may and must be considered as absolutely one and the same in intent; the "Word" and the Son-ship in the Epistle, answering to and fully and entirely satisfying the words, "the Word was with God and the Word was God" of the Gospel, and at any rate completely displacing the Demiurgus or ministerial Delegate of Plato, which we repeat was no more than a subjective idea, drawn from experience of the workings of his own mind in his own undertakings, the mind and will setting in action and directing the ready and half-reasoning hand.

The "Word" being throughout at once the subject, the life and the light of this Gospel, we doubt not that there was at all times a spiritual guard over the Evangelist and as it were a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life and knowledge from all such assailants, and that that guard was the "Word" Himself.

But nevertheless if they who in these days speak so complacently of the development of religion in the sense of its accommodating or yielding itself to our modern advances in secular knowledge and culture, are right in any one main point, we are entirely wrong in all ours. By these the grand simplicity and unison of all vital doctrine of the Church is persistently overlooked or discarded. In our belief and as we firmly hold, the Word that once came down into our world is with us still, and will be so, as He promised, even to the end; and He being eternal can never change, nor can any even the smallest part of His laws ever pass away. But now we are told of new Christianities to come, and if so, then of course of a God of uncertainties and contradictions. We even hear of a "Christianity of the nineteenth century," as if there could be more than one, or as if each century as it passes is to be entitled to a new Christ with an improved scheme of his own. These we take to be either the heterodox angels, on mission to preach other doctrines than St. Paul's referred to by him, or of those who incline generally to peace at any price, and yet look to retain their position as churchmen.

But whence the now prevalent and very sententious propagandist spirit of Antitheism absolute, that namely of those to whom nothing is eternal but the grave? The answer is perhaps not so far off as it may at first sight seem to be.

It may be fancy, but the order in sequence of the four Gospels as they stand in our Bible, recalls to our thoughts the 19th Psalm, which after declaring the glory of God in figures taken from the visible creation, and especially, for instance, in that of "the Sun coming forth as a bridegroom



out of his chamber, and rejoicing as a giant to run his course," breaks suddenly off to describe the yet higher glory of His spiritual law, in words too grand and perfect to be partially repeated here, wringing at last from the very heart of David the emphatic adjuring cry "O Lord my strength and my redeemer."

The Fourth Gospel thus appropriately following the three Synoptics as their fitting complement, opens authoritatively with a declaration, that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" followed by an unfolding alike authoritative of the attributes and the office of that Word in relation to ourselves. We allow that this is dogma, and we know that there are no common lines on which we can meet you; but our aim here is to show why the feeling of reverence essential to the discovery of truth in this question, must abide with us and be lessened if not discarded by you.

The Word as there disclosed is self-asserting, self-supporting and inconceivably grand, yet without its entire acceptance the Gospel narrative which follows sinks to the level of a biography of a perfectly good man, an ensample to us of life and nothing more. The centurion at the Crucifixion when he saw the earthquake and the things which were done, feared greatly saying, "Truly this was the Son of God." We cannot from the nature of things have the same form of proof as had this centurion of whom nothing further is recorded, but we have a far stronger and more deeply founded conviction than his. By faith we accept the Word as declared by St. John, and so accepting it, we say that such He must have been, such works He must have done and such

words He must have uttered as are written of Him in the Gospel according to the four Evangelists ; and this marks the point of final departure of the one from the other of us ; and we have nothing further to urge. If you will not examine the foundations of our faith on which alone we rely for ourselves, with unfettered and willing minds, you must continue in unbelief ; for there is no other way.

There are nominally several kinds of rejection of scripture teaching. There is the rejection of the weak and wavering, with no more resolution than a swinging door ; the rejection of the materialist, who perhaps does not always know that he rejects ; the rejection of the indifferent and many others ; but the most hopeless of all is that of the constitutional Sceptic. Every Sceptic is *thorough*. He has schooled himself to a habit of doubt in all things, and worships his own mind thus shorn of the faculties that lead to and enable him to accept belief. Nothing will ever induce him to move off his own lines. He is like a wizard raising charms in a circle, who knows or thinks that he is only safe within the line drawn by himself.

If in this question you keep the " Word " steadfastly and worthily in mind, you can never for an instant be wanting in reverence for your subject, nor long resist the influence which will meet you in your search ; which influence is the proof, because it is the gift of the Word itself. But the instant you reject the Word, you descend to matters of meaner import ; the spirit of irreverence seizes the occasion, and from that moment all with you is Antitheism, for there is but one step from the Word to nothing ; and if you reject this Word, how can you look

for another? or if you really think you find one, what other can he be than a God that speaks not, neither gives any sign?

But you say that you are bound to look into and consider details, and then you start at a miracle! But if Christ be truly the Word, how should he not have the power to work miracles? and having the power, how should He not have had the will to work such as are recorded of Him? How could He who of His own free will took unto Himself the nature of man, by that act determine His Eternal Godhead? There is but one miracle, and that was before all worlds.

You persistently invert our argument in this matter. We do not say that Christ was the Word because He wrought miracles, but that He wrought them because He was the Word.

In proportion as we raise our thoughts towards and keep them fixed on the Word, does our reverence for our subject abide and increase continually and for ever; if we turn aside from Him we rapidly lose the very sense of reverence for want of an object, for there is none beside; and this irreverence we think we could show is itself a test of error. We would take for an instance the God presented to us by the pure Theist; how can we revere an "eternal" who is the captive of our own intellectual spear and shield? who has neither voice, form nor power but what we give him? who is never the same to any two minds, and vanishes ere he well appears? who never gave a sign that he was other than the rushing of the wind, and whose presence or absence is equal and indifferent to all? who flinches at every syllogism, and is at best but a silent pro-

bability, the last despairing imagining of an exhausted limited mind ?

You will say that this abstraction of the pure Theists is at least on our own showing a part of our own Great Truth, every step towards which must be a step towards our Paradise. That is rather lively than effective, and reminds us of the policy of Homer's warriors, who when they missed with the spear took the chance of throwing a stone. We thought we had answered this objection before. What have you to do with our Paradise, who have one of your own, a Paradise of solved problems and fixed ideas, an Elysium wherein may yet be discerned the great Pythagoras, still in ecstasy on his discovery of the 47th Proposition of the First Book of Euclid demonstrating the properties of triangles and squares, and therein the first principles of the great law of pre-established harmony, and with and around him others since-born his sons in philosophy, and all in like ecstasies ? for as history is but the leavings of progress, and philosophy progress itself, so in matters of philosophy does discovery succeed discovery, and ecstasy ecstasy, and so has it always been down to the last new thing in bioprotoplasms. And fit and pleasing is it that so it should be ; for as every discovery is made by your own unaided intellectual vivacity, so also must the merit be entirely your own, leading thus up to a visible serene content, which when compatible with a reasonably good conscience so far excels it, that nothing has ever been known to shake or lessen it.

We are it has been said "fearfully and wonderfully made" ; but the fear and the wonder rightly directed are in respect, not of the body with all its marvels of frame-

work and adaptations, but of the spirit that inhabits and informs it. It is this spirit in us that is disquieted, and that seeks communion with and the aid of one higher and greater than itself, which unless it find, it must as surely droop continually, as the flower of the field pales and yields no healthy seed without the timely light and influence of the life-giving sun. It is the spirit then, that must search for this greater spirit, who, though most truly that which, when you speak tamely of tame things, you call the First Cause, is in relation to ourselves, and according to our apprehensions of things spiritual, something far higher and greater.

If you fairly examine yourselves and the workings of the mind and spirit that is in you, you will find that when you truly seek your Creator (and all thinking men do so at times) your thoughts fairly spring upwards towards an Eternal Spirit one and indivisible, of no assignable form, and especially free and clear of all fanciful analogies drawn from things seen, which as applied to Him are but as fetters cast into the Atlantic.

We are conscious that we are working here on our own lines, and have only to appeal to the common experience of all of you who have simply and earnestly sought (even though you may have failed to find) to say, whether you have not at such times instinctively and altogether thrown aside your science and acquired knowledge as weak and inappropriate aids, and striven solely in spirit? But indeed it must have been so, for the question concerns all alike, and all are not men of science or of intellectual acquirements; and the spirit thus sought, having equal right over all, is too high to be a respecter of persons. But above all, we would ask if you have never at such

times had a sense of a living presence ; and if you have, has it never returned to you, and has it not been always the same ?

But you say that you have thus sought and failed to find, and therefore there is no such Spirit. But what a conclusion, and from what premises ! Why do you drive us, your favourers and flatterers, to hard words ? He whom you have sought and not found is your Maker, your Lord and your Judge, and must be approached worthily ; and have you truly such a sense of your own worthiness as to be sure that you have so approached Him ? and if you are not sure of this, what right have you to arraign, as some of you directly and many others obliquely have done, those who have sought and found, as maintainers of a " monstrous superstition " ?

We take the truth to be, that in your ineffectual search you have proposed terms and conditions of your own, instead of accepting those through grace offered to you ; and so strong are you for what you call your intellectual rights, that if you could have stood beside the prophet Ezekiel, and witnessed with him the resurrection of the dry bones, you would have found natural causes for every stage of the process rather than have given way in a single point.

We may all have witnessed how delightedly a writer, now deceased, on one occasion at least, expressed joy on being freed from all belief in God and immortality, which state we were invited to accept with the writer as " the highest expression of rational man apart from theological determination."

We little expected that we should have had occasion to quote Kant, an unbeliever, in our own favour, but we feel

tempted, and shall we think be excused for so doing ; “There probably never existed a righteous soul which could bear the thought that death is the end of all, and whose noble disposition did not rise to the hope of the future.”—*Stuckenburg's 'Life of Kant,'* p. 242.

But we know that we shall not prevail with you, because all that we have to present you with is the Word ; and we must therefore perforce leave you to your little antagonistic notabilities of numbers, lines, curves, motions, material energies and all the rest of them, the upstarts of yesterday, for they had all beginnings. At or immediately before the creation of this so called material world, these notabilities being material phenomena existed only undisplayed and undeclared in the unsearchable foreknowledge and consciousness of the Eternal Mind, in whom the past, present and future are all as one co-existent idea. Even if we accept matter as always existing, it must at some time have existed without form conceivable by us, and you, the materialists, are searching for what you know and confess you can never reach ; for it is certain that without an idea of some form, the mind is a blank, and cannot reason ; neither the inductive nor deductive process can have any action without something to begin from, and thus even your favourite induction is not almighty. Even if we could by any means arrive at Aristotle's primitive matter unclad in form, there must have been something before it (for it has suffered change), and that something, not being clad in form though itself the cause of form we can never reach ; and further, the distance or difference between that something and the primitive form of which it is the cause, must be infinitely greater than that

between the same primitive form, and the later forms of things as they now are ; for the cause must always be greater than its effect, the Creator than His works ; and the seen effects in this case are the limits of our conceptions. It follows then that in any true search after the First Cause, you must seek with all your heart and mind for an objective Spiritual Guide, to whom you must entirely submit yourselves, or you must altogether fail. This, our own sole hope, is the strength of our last and parting blow. We know that you will again and again say that you have never been able to find this Guide, but with your eyes continually fixed on the ground counting and arranging the pebbles at your feet, how can you ever hope to find what is so high above you, and is not a pebble ?



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